HYPNOTISM AND SPIRITISM

DR. JOSEPH DAPPOLT

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HYPNOTISM AND SPIRITISM

HYPNOTISM AND SPIRITISM

A CRITICAL AND MEDICAL STUDY

BY

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PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION

THE first large edition of my modest work having been so quickly exhausted, I have decided, in consequence of repeated and insistent requests, to issue a revised edition containing fresh documents and some further considerations.

I cherish the hope that the amendments which have been made will be appreciated by intelligent and sympathetic readers; and I trust, at the same time, that the present critical study will help to throw a little light on a much-discussed and perplexing question.

DR. JOSEPH LAPPONI.

ROME, *April*, 1906.

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HYPNOTISM AND SPIRITISM

INTRODUCTION

1. Importance and necessity of studying the question—2. Requests, desires, and delays—3. Foundation and nature of the facts exposed in the present work relatively to science — 4. Method and development of treatment of the materials.

1. The discussion of hypnotism and of spiritism is of so much importance nowadays that almost every one realizes the necessity of knowing something about it.

But there are very few who are in a position or who have time to grasp fully all the facts of the case. There are many people, even among the cultured, to whom hypnotism and spiritism are one and the same thing, or very nearly so, or who confuse the facts exclusively the property of the one with those that belong to the other, or who attribute to the one the nature and the character of the other.

Whoever wishes to judge fairly correctly, although perhaps inadequately, of certain phenomena must see that it cannot be otherwise, when he considers the copious, though still elementary, biological material in hand.

2. It is not without reason, therefore, that many who have been good enough to follow my course on practical anthropology, and not a few distinguished scientists, have over and over again begged me to treat more fully of this intricate question but roughly sketched in my lectures, so that they might also acquire a sufficient knowledge thereof for the needs of every-day life.

I should have liked to accede immediately to the urgent wishes of so many kind friends and so many students. But unforeseen circumstances obliged me to put off from day to day the realization of my desire, and would only allow me to promise that I would comply with these repeated requests as soon as possible.

3. Every promise is a debt, and even justifiable delays have a limit. This is why I have at last set myself to explain all that I have been able to learn on this subject, partly by means of personal observa-

tion and partly by patient and minute analysis of the facts witnessed, evidence sifted and related, by naturalists who by their learning are most competent and by their honesty are above all censure.

All that I now have to say about hypnotism lies fully within the domains of positive science, especially physical and pathological. With regard to what I have to explain about spiritism, the reader will judge for himself whether the facts bear me out, and whether the interpretation which, after a critical examination, I shall put upon them is just.

4. But in order that the argument may be sufficiently clear in every part, I have deemed it advisable to begin with the narration of certain historical facts bearing on hypnotism as well as on spiritism. I shall speak of the facts peculiar to hypnotism and to spiritism, indicating when necessary the authorities which prove, at least in part, their objective existence. I shall then examine the analogy and the difference between the two kinds of facts so far placed on record. After which I shall discuss the intimate nature of both kinds, not omitting to point out the various, but not always practical,

genetical interpretations which some naturalists have given. And finally I shall indicate the social and individual effects of hypnotism as well as of spiritism, pointing out the precautions indispensable for their due regulation in the social and moral order of mankind.

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL DATA

I. Hypnotism

1. Hypnotism in olden times—2. Hypnotism in the Middle Ages—3. Mesmer and his predecessors; Magnetism and Mesmerism—4. Mesmerism and the relations of Bailly to the faculty of Paris—5. Count Cagliostro, Giuseppe Balsamo—6. The disciples of Mesmer—7. Husson and his report to the Academy of Medicine in Paris on animal magnetism—8. James Braid; Magnetism, Hypnotism, Braidism—9. The French School from 1858 to our own days.

1. The ancients were probably well acquainted, to a large extent at least, with the greater number of the phenomena that are now attributed to hypnotism, which, however, were known under the name of magic (which etymologically means *priesthood, wisdom*).

The Medes, the Chaldæans, the Brahmins of India, and the priests of ancient Egypt were certainly not ignorant of these phenomena. Some

practices described, according to Lenormant, in cuneiform writing; certain cases related by Maspero in the *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'Orient;** many disturbing facts observed in primitive society; and the wonders which even nowadays are worked by the Indian Brahmins, jealous guardians of the sacred traditions of caste, are all things which attest the great antiquity of the operations which constitute the hypnotism of our day. Also the miracles which, with regard to nervous maladies, were worked in the Egyptian temple of Serapis were, without doubt, the effects of hypnotic influences. In the so-called Harris papyrus on magic, written in the Egyptian sacred writing about 3000 years B.C., and translated in 1860 by Chabas, the processes used by those whom to-day we should call hypnotists are largely exposed. The priests of ancient Greece were also undoubtedly versed in hypnotic practices. It would seem, also, that the Sibyls were subject to subconscious, spontaneous, and hypnotic phenomena, for they foretold future events after convulsive seizures.†

* Pp. 70 and 142. Paris, 1886.

† Dr. C. Conca, *Isterismo e Ipnotismo*, p. 40. Naples: Pignataro, 1888.

The ancient Romans, so far as I have been able to trace, did not have any special cult for hypnotic practices. Nevertheless, it would have been difficult for them to ignore them absolutely, because of their numerous and varied relations with Greece, a country both cultivated and corrupt.

2. In more recent times, either on account of changed conditions or the invasions of the barbarians, the knowledge so well known to the ancients of spiritistic operations, and of the nature and effect of certain natural phenomena, was lost. However, hypnotism did not cease to exist. On the contrary, as a morbid spontaneous phenomenon it spread beyond all description in old Europe. The witches of the Middle Ages, about whom Cantù* writes much that is highly instructive, prove this fact to us in an eloquent manner. For the majority (I say the majority, and not the whole) of those who were thought by the people, or who declared themselves, to be wizards and sorcerers, and who prepared themselves periodically by fantastic practices and extraordinary methods to take part in certain nocturnal and

* Cf. Cantù, *Storia Universale*, 10th edit., 1888, vol. viii. pt. i. pp. 292–304.

mysterious adventures, were almost without doubt but poor deluded people easily susceptible to hypnotic suggestion. This fact is recognized and declared by, amongst others, Ulrico Molitore,* Andrea Alciati,† Reginald Scot,‡ Celso Cesalpino,§ Giovanni Wierio,‖ and, above all, by the famous Jesuit Friedrich Spree.

The last-named, indeed, affirmed that of all the persons sentenced in his country for witchcraft, the greater part, if not all, were condemned without reason. And he has left behind these memorable words written by himself: "I can say on my oath that I have never accompanied any one to the stake whom I could call guilty. I have heard the same said by two learned theologians. Henceforth I shall use all my endeavors to bring the truth to light." ¶

However this may be, it is quite certain that the ancients deemed it both useful and prudent to surround with mystery the knowledge which they possessed about certain devices, and that the people

* *De Pythonicis mulieribus.* Papiæ, 1480.
† *Parergon Juris.* 1530.
‡ *Discovery of Witchcraft.* 1584.
§ *Demonum Investigatio.* Florentiæ, 1550.
‖ *De Lamiis.* Basilæ, 1564.
¶ Cantù, as quoted above, p. 297.

of the Middle Ages, without knowing it, experienced the grave effects of hypnotic phenomena.

3. The German physician Mesmer occupies the first place amongst those who undertook to reveal to the public the mysteries of a science jealously guarded by the ancient sages, and his doctrine of animal magnetism is largely based on this science. Many of his strange exploits were but phenomena of hypnotism, as is proved by the very nature of the results obtained by him, and by the means to which he had recourse (such as the holding of hands, fixing the eyes, passes, and sudden noises).

But when he first used the term animal magnetism, he did not in the least guess that it might etymologically signify, as was found out later by Lombard the elder, "the powerful influence of animal intelligence on organic matter."* He was alluding to quite different phenomena when he combined these two words.

Mesmer, who took his doctor's degree at Vienna, propounds in one of his public dissertations in 1765 (*De planetarum influxu*) the ideas of Paracelsus, of

* Lombard, *Les Dangers du Magnétisme Animal, etc.* Paris, 1819.

Agrippa, and of Girolamo Cardano, and maintains that the stars exercise a direct action on living bodies by means of an imponderable fluid which penetrates everything.

Later, astonished by the narration of the wonderful medical cures which were obtained in the sixteenth century by Gilbert, Glocerio, and Van Helmont, and in the seventeenth by the Englishman Robert Flud, by the use of the magnet and of metallic plates on the body of the sick person, and more than ever astounded by the marvellous biological effects obtained on animals and men in his time by Father Hell, a Jesuit and able physician, by means of the magnet, Mesmer was led to believe that the magnet, when placed in touch with the human body, could act in the same manner as the stars do by means of a particular fluid, namely, the magnetic fluid.

Finally, envious of the daily increasing success that Father Hell obtained in the cure of the sick by the application of his magnet, Mesmer thought to revive the theories of Paracelsus, Ficino, Pomponazio, and of another Jesuit, Fr. Kircher, on the influence that certain persons exercise on the bodies

of others.* He affirmed that, similarly to the magnet, the hands and the eyes of certain individuals could operate by means of a special fluid which emanated at will from their bodies, like the black liquid that a cuttlefish ejects into the waters to protect itself from its enemies And he supposes that that special fluid proper to animals was similar to that which radiated constantly and surely from the magnet.

Mesmer's doctrines were combated in Vienna, and he went in 1778 to Paris. There he formulated more explicitly his theory of the fluid that can emanate at will from the human body. And because of the analogy which he believed to exist between this and the "fluid" from the magnet, he called it animal magnetism in a memorandum written in 1779, which, although notable, was very diffuse and vague.

The name seemed so appropriate that he did not delay to apply it to all the facts alleged to prove the existence of the supposed but never demonstrated fluid, and also to the doctrine derived therefrom.

But the followers of Mesmer preferred to call

* Conca, as above, pp. 52, 53.

the doctrine of animal magnetism by the name of mesmerism, in honor of their master; they employed the term "animal magnetism" to indicate either the fluid itself or the collection of facts whereby its existence was supposed to be proved.

4. The doctrine of mesmerism, received with favor and enthusiasm by such eminent men as Deslon, head of the Faculty of Medicine at Paris, and even by Louis XVI., was some little while afterwards severely criticised by a commission composed of doctors, among whom was Bailly.* Condemned as dangerous to society, morals, and physical health, the doctrine, founded on manifestations which, marvellous as they were, depended largely on imagination and the power of imitation, fell rapidly into disrepute. To escape vexations and worries, Mesmer left France in 1785 and took refuge in England.

5. Hardly had mesmerism been condemned in the name of science, than an arch-quack, a native of Palermo, Giuseppe Balsamo, better known under the usurped name of Count Alessandro di Cagliostro,

* Bailly, *Report of the Commission entrusted with the Examination of Animal Magnetism.* Paris, 1784.

in 1785 (the same year that Mesmer retired to England) tried to revive the doctrine, mixing it up in a marvellous way with medicine, chemistry, and with other sciences at that time considered occult, with devices and superstitions of all kinds, as well as with practices similar to those now employed in spiritism. Cagliostro's object was to use to his own advantage the ideas of Mesmer. But there was nothing serious, scientific, or even soundly theoretical in his experiments, and the publicity which the attempt occasioned was of somewhat short duration. The one practical result which it had was to throw mesmerism and spiritism into such confusion that even nowadays it is difficult to distinguish the results due to one from those belonging to the other.

Implicated in somewhat shady transactions, Cagliostro was imprisoned in 1787, and in 1788 was in exile. The following year he returned to Rome, and there met the fate he deserved. His star had set for ever. Meanwhile and for some years afterwards Mesmer in London was peacefully enjoying the fruits of his incoherent lucubrations. He finally returned to his native land, where he died in March, 1815.

6. But mesmerism did not perish with its two pioneers. Thus, whilst it was still combated in the name of official science, a disciple of Mesmer, the Marquis de Puységur, discovered in 1784 artificial somnambulism.* In 1787 Pélétin de Lione studied and discovered artificial catalepsy;† and in 1810 General Noizet presented the Academy of Berlin with a memorandum on *Somnambulism* and *Animal Magnetism*, a French translation of which was published in Paris in 1814 by Plon.

About this time appeared Faria, a Portuguese abbot who had been in India, where he had learnt many hypnotic practices from the Brahmins. Himself an accurate observer, he denied the existence of any magnetic fluid, and tried to prove that the marvels of animal magnetism are due merely to the imagination.‡ But the denials and assertions of Faria did not succeed in striking at the roots of mesmerism. If the interpretations were

* *Mémoire pour servir à l'Histoire du Magnétisme Animal* (it is by Puységur, but bears no name) (1784); Deleuze, *Histoire Critique du Magnétisme Animal* (1813), vol. ii.

† Pélétin, *Mémoire sur le Catalepsie et la Somnambulisme.* Lyon, 1787.

‡ De Faria, *De la Cause du Sommeil lucide, etc.* (Paris, 1819), vol. i. (the only one published), p. 41.

erroneous the facts still remained, and great minds were bent on separating the dross from the gold, and on placing the matter on a scientific basis. In 1852 Du Pôtet published his *Traité complet du Magnétisme Animal,* and Alexander Bertrand gave a course on the same subject, which was attended by people from all parts.

7. In 1825 Foissac asked the Paris Academy of Medicine to re-examine the report made by the Bailly commission in 1784.* After a lively debate, the Academy decided in 1826 to grant Foissac's request, and appointed a commission, of which Husson was the head. After studying the matter for six years, the commission in 1831 presented a lengthy report to the Academy, in which many facts, both physiological and psychological, relative to the so-called animal magnetism were demonstrated, though with somewhat unsatisfactory explanations, and it was proposed to make rules to check abuses.

But the commission was led into error by the fraud of some of the subjects examined, and included

* Burdin et Dubois, *Histoire Académique du Magnétisme Animal* (Paris, 1841), p. 278.

among the established facts of animal magnetism some data that were doubtful and even certainly false. This did much to retard the study and progress of animal magnetism.

In 1837 Dr. Berna announced to the Paris Academy of Medicine that he was ready to demonstrate the existence of animal magnetism by means of clairvoyance, second sight, and the power of foretelling the future, and much more of a similar nature. The Academy, which had thought no more of animal magnetism, and had allowed Husson's valuable report to be forgotten, consented to examine Berna's claims. But the experiments failed completely, and, in accordance with a report made by Dubois d'Amiens, the Academy itself, in 1837, unqualifiedly condemned animal magnetism as mere trickery. The protests of Husson did not succeed in mitigating this sentence. Its justice seemed all the more reasonable to scientific men since the fruitless and discouraging outcome of the challenge issued by Burdin, who, in 1837, offered a prize of three thousand francs to any magnetized person who within three years could read writing without seeing it — a feat which had been declared not

only possible but also demonstrable by Dr. Berna.* Following on the negative issue of this public challenge, the Academy thought it could give its final decision, and in 1840 the proposal of Double was accepted, that in the future no more notice should be taken of magnetizers or magnetism.

8. But a few years later a Scottish surgeon in Manchester, named James Braid, a clever experimentalist and an acute observer, examined the claims of the mesmerists. He obtained similar results, which he put before the public in a valuable work published in 1843. And in order that the name of mesmerism or of animal magnetism should not be an obstacle to the spread and acceptance of the truth, he generalized his observations under the name of Neurypnology, and spoke for the first time of nervous sleep and hypnotism.†

Braid took great care to clearly separate the facts ascertained from those which were not verified by himself. The first he classed under the name of *Hypnotism*, or *nervous sleep*, and left to the others,

* Burdin et Dubois, as above, pp. 570–630.

† J. Braid, *Neurypnologie Traité du Sommeil Nerveux ou Hypnotisme.* French translation by J. Simon, 1843, with the addition of the chapter written by Braid in 1860.

of whose truth he could not give any guarantee, the old name of *mesmerism* and of *animal magnetism*, although, according to the thoroughly demonstrated facts, the two are but one and the same thing. Trickery and fraud do not make science.

Meanwhile, however, other works were being published on *mesmerism*, of which the most noteworthy was that by James Esdaile, which appeared in 1846.*

In 1860 Braid developed in a separate chapter his ideas on the subject of nervous sleep, a phenomenon already known to a few by means of the article on sleep in Todd and Carpenter's *Encyclopædia*, and of a scientific appendix published by Victoire Meunier in the *Presse* of 1852, as well as by the article on hypnotism inserted for the first time in the *Medical Dictionary* of Nisten (ed. 1855), but even these few knew little more about it than the name Braidism by which it was termed, and this notwithstanding the valuable works on animal magnetism published almost contemporaneously by Charpignon and Bellanger.†

* J. Esdaile, *Mesmerism in India.* London, 1846.

† Charpignon, *Du Magnétisme* (Paris, 1848); Bellanger, *Le Magnétisme Vérités et Chimères* (Paris, 1854); J. P. Phillips, *Cours théorique et pratique du Braidisme* (Paris, 1860).

9. Dr. Azam of Bordeaux proposed in 1858 to investigate the facts given by Braid. He studied them for two years, aided by Drs. Velpeau, Broca, Verneuil, Cloquet, and Follin of the Faculty of Paris. He made no further discoveries, but published an account of his work in 1860.*

The facts observed by Braid and by Azam were again examined by Mesnet, Dermarquay, Giraud-Teulon, and by Duval.

Later, in 1875, Richet studied the same subject under the name of artificial somnambulism.

But it was reserved to Charcot, to Bernheim, to Liébeault, to Liégeois, and to their school to give to the phenomena of hypnotism that development and scientific basis by means of which they are nowadays accepted amongst doctors, and to prove that at bottom, and in their really scientific aspects, mesmerism, somnambulism, artificial catalepsy, nervous sleep, braidism, and hypnotism are but one and the same thing.

* Azam, *Note sur l'Hypnotisme in Archiv. Générale de Médecine.* 1860.

II. Spiritism

1. Spiritism in antiquity, and particularly among the Indians and the Egyptians—2. Spiritism among the ancient Jews—3. Spiritism among the Jews in the time of Christ—4. Spiritism in ancient Greece—5. Spiritism among the ancient Romans—6. Spiritism among the savages in the early days of Christianity and in the Middle Ages—7. The spiritism of the Renaissance—8. Spiritism among the savages of the New World—9. Spiritism in Europe from the Renaissance to the second half of the nineteenth century—10. The Fox family and modern spiritism—11. Rapid spread of spiritism—12. Struggles, progress, and forms of spiritism.

1. Spiritism is a term of recent date, for it does not go back more than half a century. But the facts and the doctrine to which it is applied are of a much more remote age, and in different times and different countries they have received different names.

From the earliest times a belief existed in actual relations between men yet living and the dead, as well as between the former and immaterial beings of a superior order. And in justification of this belief in every century there have been innumerable tales of marvellous happenings from time immemorial. In India, among the Brahmins, there

existed, and still exists in the fundamental basis of the liturgy in the temples, the practice of invoking the dead and their divinities. The fakirs, who belong to the inferior rank of the sacerdotal caste, are always entrusted with the operations necessary to this cult.

The whole power of the sacerdotal caste depended, and in India still depends, on a kind of subjection that the dead, and even the divinities, seem to be under to those who are members.

Amongst the Egyptians communication with the spirits entered largely into the initiation to the mysteries and cult of Isis and Osiris. The priests, the magicians, and the soothsayers were the depositaries of the means needful to enter into relation with the beings of a higher order and with the souls of the deceased. Probably the Egyptians learned spiritistic practices from the Chaldæan magicians.

The enchantments favored by the Egyptians are fully related in the seventh and eighth chapters of Exodus.

Aaron, on the invitation of Moses, in presence of Pharaoh and his servants—who certainly were not few in number, or likely to be tricked by the first

comer—turns his rod into a serpent. "And the wise men and the magicians also by Egyptian enchantments and certain secrets, did in like manner." But the serpent from Aaron's rod devoured the others.*

Shortly afterwards the same Aaron, in presence of Pharaoh and of his entire court, converted into blood the waters of the river. The same was done with the waters by the magicians with their enchantments—*incantationibus suis;* and the people had to dig fresh wells quickly to have water to drink.†

Not many days after the land, and the whole people from the king to the last subject in the realm, were infested by command of Aaron with a plague of loathsome frogs. *Fecerunt autem et malefici per incantationes suas similiter:*‡ they did but succeed in increasing the swarm of repulsive visitors. Only Aaron could repair the damage inflicted, whilst the magicians showed themselves powerless to raise a barrier against the scourge.

* Exodus vii. 11, 12.

† Exodus vii. 20 *seq.*

‡ "And the magicians also by their incantations, did in like manner."—Exodus viii. 7.

2. Spiritistic practices were undoubtedly fairly well known by the ancient Jews; for in the Bible we read not only of magicians, soothsayers, fortune-tellers, and enchanters, but the calling up of the dead is clearly related and condemned in many passages. The magicians, soothsayers, fortune-tellers, and enchanters of the Bible correspond exactly with the mediums of modern spiritism.

In Leviticus (xx. 6) one reads: "*Anima quae declinaverit ad magos et ariolos, et fornicata fuerit cum eis, ponam faciem meam contra eam et interficiam illam de medio populi sui.*"* And a little farther on (xx. 27): "*Vir, sive mulier, in quibus pythonicus, vel divinationis fuerit spiritus, morte moriantur: lapidibus obruent eos: sanguis eorum sit super illos.*" † So great a punishment would not have been necessary except to suppress at all costs an abominable and widely spread practice.

* "The soul that shall go aside after magicians and soothsayers, and shall commit fornication with them, I will set my face against that soul, and destroy it out of the midst of its people."

† "A man or woman, in whom there is a pythonical or divining spirit, dying let them die; they shall stone them: their blood be upon them."

In Deuteronomy is written (xviii. 10–12): "*Nec inveniatur in te, qui ariolos sciscitetur, . . . nec incantator, nec qui pythones consulat, nec divinos, aut quaerat a mortuis veritatem: omnia enim haec abominatur Dominus.*" *

In the First Book of Kings, Saul is described as bringing up the ghost of Samuel and speaking with him. The description of the circumstance reproduces exactly the marvels that are nowadays related by the spiritists. We give the whole of this wonderful description from the Old Testament (1 Kings xxviii. 7–21): "*Dixit Saul servis suis: quaerite mihi mulierem pythonem habentem, et vadam ad eam, et sciscitabor per illam. Et dixerunt servi eius ad eum: Est mulier pythonem habens in Endor. Mutavit ergo habitum suum, vestitusque est aliis vestimentis, et abiit ipse et duo viri cum eo, veneruntque ad mulierem nocte, et ait illi: Divina mihi in pythone, et suscita mihi quem dixero tibi. Et ait mulier ad eum: Ecce, tu nosti, quanta fecerit Saul, et quo modo eraserit magos et ariolos de terra: quare ergo insidiaris ani-*

*"Neither let there be found among you any one that . . . observeth dreams and omens, . . . nor charmer, nor any one that consulteth pythonic spirits, or fortune-tellers, or that seeketh the truth from the dead. For the Lord abhorreth all these things."

mae meae, ut occidar? Et iuravit ei Saul in Domino, dicens: Vivit Dominus, quia non eveniet tibi quidquam mali propter hanc rem. Dixitque ei mulier: Quem suscitabo tibi? Qui ait: Samuelem mihi suscita. Cum autem vidisset mulier Samuelem, exclamavit voce magna, et dixit ad Saul: Quare imposuisti mihi? Tu es enim Saul. Dixitque ei rex: Noli timere: quid vidisti? Et ait mulier ad Saul: Deos vidi ascendentes de terra. Dixitque ei: Qualis est forma ejus? Quae ait: Vir senex ascendit, et ipse amictus est pallio. Et intellexit Saul, quod Samuel esset, et inclinavit se super faciem suam in terra, et adoravit. Dixit autem Samuel ad Saul: Quare inquietasti me, ut suscitarer? Et ait Saul: Coarctor nimis, siquidem Philisthiim pugnant adversum me, et Deus recessit a me, et exaudire me noluit, neque in manu Prophetarum, neque per somnia: vocavi ergo te, ut ostenderes mihi, quid faciam. Et ait Samuel: Quid interrogas me, cum Dominus recesserit a te, et transierit ad aemulum tuum? . . . Et dabit Dominus etiam Israel tecum in manus Philisthiim, cras autem tu et filii tui mecum eritis: sed et castra Israel tradet Dominus in manus Philisthiim. Statimque Saul cecidit porrectus in terram; extimuerat enim verba Samuelis. . . . Ingressa

est itaque mulier illa ad Saul (conturbatus enim erat valde)." *

* "And Saul said to his servants: 'Seek me a woman that hath a divining spirit: and I will go to her, and inquire by her.' And his servants said to him: 'There is a woman that hath a divining spirit at Endor.' Then he disguised himself and put on other clothes, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night, and he said to her: 'Divine to me by thy divining spirit, and bring me up him whom I shall tell thee.' And the woman said to him: 'Behold thou knowest all that Saul hath done, and how he hath rooted out the magicians and soothsayers from the land: why then dost thou lay a snare for my life, to cause me to be put to death?' And Saul swore unto her by the Lord, saying: 'As the Lord liveth, there shall no evil happen to thee for this thing.' And the woman said to him: 'Whom shall I bring up to thee?' And he said: 'Bring me up Samuel.' And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice, and said to Saul: 'Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul.' And the king said to her: 'Fear not: what hast thou seen?' And the woman said to Saul: 'I saw gods ascending out of the earth.' And he said to her: 'What form is he of?' And she said: 'An old man cometh up, and he is covered with a mantle.' And Saul understood that it was Samuel, and he bowed himself with his face to the ground and adored. And Samuel said to Saul: 'Why hast thou disturbed my rest, that I should be brought up?' And Saul said: 'I am in great distress: for the Philistines fight against me, and God is departed from me, and would not hear me, neither by the hand of prophets nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest show me what I shall do.' And Samuel said: 'Why askest thou me, seeing the Lord has departed from thee and is gone over to thy rival? . . . And the Lord also will deliver Israel with thee into the hands of the Philistines: and to-morrow thou and

In the Fourth Book of Kings spiritistic practices are alluded to in chapter xvii. 17, chapter xxi. 6, and chapter xxiii. 24.

Among the prophets Isaias mentions the apparition of spirits (ii. 6; xxxiv. 14; xliv. 25; xlvii. 12). Speaking of Babylon devastated by the Medes, he prophesies that "*habitabunt ibi struthiones, et pilosi* [that is, the demons] *saltabunt ibi*" (xiii. 21).

Still more clearly he alludes to spiritistic practices in chapter viii. 19, where he thus expresses himself: "*Et cum dixerint vobis: Quaerite a pythonibus, et a divinis, qui strident in incantationibus suis: numquid non populus a Deo suo requiret pro vivis ac mortuis?*" *

And he says the same in chapter xxix. 4: "*De humo audietur eloquium tuum, et erit quasi pythonis de terra vox tua, et de humo eloquium tuum mussitabit.*" †

thy sons shall be with me: and the Lord will also deliver the army of Israel into the hands of the Philistines.' And forthwith Saul fell all along on the ground, for he was frightened with the words of Samuel. . . . And the woman came to Saul, for he was very much troubled." (Douai vers.)

* "And when they shall say to you: Seek of pythons, and of diviners, who mutter in their enchantments: Should not the people seek of their God, for the living of the dead?"

† "Thy speech shall be heard out of the ground: and thy

The prophet Daniel also speaks of magicians, diviners, and soothsayers (ii. 2, 27). The prophet Micheas alludes to sorceries and divinations (v. 11).

3. The charge with which the Jews reproached Christ of casting out devils in the name of Beelzebub (St. Matt. ix. 34; xii. 24; St. Luke xi. 14, 19) proves that the intercourse of men with spirits was not an unknown or rare occurrence in their times.

In the Acts of the Apostles the spiritistic practices in use among the Jews are plainly indicated in what is said about Simon the magician (viii. 9); and by the doings of Elymas, a Jew living in Paphos with the proconsul Sergius Paulus (xiii. 6–10).

The Apostle St. Paul, in his second epistle to his beloved Timothy, speaks of the magician Jannes and Mambres, who resisted Moses before Pharao.

Jaccolliot, in his work *La Bible dans les Indes*,* tells us that, as far as we can judge by the fragments remaining to us, the Kabbala gave the Jews information on the way to hold intercourse with spirits.

voice shall be from the ground like that of the python, and out of the ground thy speech shall mutter."

* Paris, 1869.

4. In ancient Greece the oracles of the dead were constantly being invoked. In his *Odyssey*, Homer describes Ulysses, who, acting on the advice and instructions of the magician Circe, questioned the ghost of Tebano Tiresia, that of his own mother, and those of many others, not only his own kin, but famous persons. The Greeks invoked the spirits of the deceased on the bank of Acherontes in Tesprozia, at Figalia in Arcadia, at Cape Terano, at Heraclea in Pontus, and at Cumæ in Greater Greece. Those who indulged in these practices were called necromancers (from *νεχρός*="dead" and *μαγγανεύω*="enchantment"). Nor was it only the common people who liked to have recourse to the oracles of the dead and to seek answers. One of the seven sages of Greece, Periander, sent to consult the soul of his wife whose throat he had previously cut.* Pausanias called up the ghost of a boy whom he had killed. Later the magistrates caused the soul of the same Pausanias to be evoked.†

Æschinus speaks of Trinonda and Euribates,

* Herodotus, v. 94.

† Plutarch, *Vita di Cimino;* id., *Delle dilazioni della Divina Giustizia; Scoliaste di Euripide*, in "Alceste," v. 1138.

celebrated already in his time for impostures and sorceries.*

It is known of Socrates that he had frequent communications with his tutelary "genius" from whom he received many warnings. Some of these had reference to his own personal affairs, others to those of his friends whose plans were unknown to him. Plato in the *Teagetes* quotes Socrates as relating (and substantiating his narrative by referring to those who knew) a number of cases in which, having received warnings from his "genius" concerning the hidden affairs of his friends, he was enabled to give them timely and useful advice. This, he adds, was generally disregarded, much to the detriment of those whom it concerned.

We can quote besides, as having had communications with spirits, the names of Aristoteles, Flavius Josephus, Lucian, and Philostratus.†

Ephesus was famous for its books on magic and for its magical formulas. In the Acts of the Apostles ‡ the Evangelist St. Luke tells us that when

* Æschinus, *Oraz contro Ctesifonte.*

† Aristoteles, *De Mirab.*, 160; Flavius, *Antiq.*, vi. 11, 12; *De Bello Jud.*, vii. 6, 13; Lucian, *Philopseud.*, 16; Philostratus, *Vita Apollon.*, 4, 20, 25.

‡ xix. 19.

St. Paul preached in Ephesus, many of those who had exercised the magic arts brought their books to him and burnt them in his presence.

5. And the Romans were not behind the Greeks. As early as the legislation of the Twelve Tables those who practised sorcery were punished by death, as is seen by the following: *"Siquis alienas fruges ex cantassit, kapital esto."** In the narrative of Virgil,† speaking of Eneas, who descended to the lower regions to consult the ghost of Anchises, there is probably only a reference to spiritistic practices. Cicero ‡ tells us plainly that his friend Appius had frequent conversations with the dead. And he adds that on Lake Avernus, in the neighborhood of Arpinum, very often the ghosts of the still bleeding dead were made to rise. Pliny the Elder tells how Livius Drusus was put to death by Tiberius for having disturbed him whilst he was evoking spirits; and that the grammarian Appius called up the ghost of Homer to question him about his country and his parents.§

Columella mentions the wizard Dardanus.‖

* In Apuleius, *Apologia* edit. Didot, p. 230, col. 2, and p. 264.
† *Æneid*, book vi.
‡ *Tusculane*, i. 16, 37; *De Divinat.*, i. 58, 132.
§ *Histor.*, xxx. 6.
‖ *De re Rustica*, book x.

Horace alludes to enchantments more than once.* And Suetonius tells us that Augustus when he became Pontiff caused more than two thousand books on the black arts to be publicly burned.†

Lucan, schoolmate and rival of Nero, tells us, in the sixth book of his *Farsagla*, of the famous sorceress of Tessaglia, *Eraton cruda*, "Che richiamava l'ombra ai corpi sui." By her means Sextus Pompeius was informed of the end of the enmity between his father and Cæsar. The divine Alighieri relates the tradition according to which this famous sorceress called up later in some of her operations the spirit of Virgil, but lately dead:

> "Di poco era di me la carne nuda,
> Ch'ella mi fece entrar dentro a quel muro,
> Per trarne un spirto . . ." ‡

Petronius Arbiter § speaks of children being stolen by magicians.

Apuleius, having married a widow owning 40,000 sesterces, was accused by her relations of

* *Satira*, viii.; *Epod.*, iii., xii., xvii.
† *Vita Augusti*, xxxi.
‡ *Inferno*, ix. 25–27.
§ Works frag. 63, edit. F. Didot.

having obtained her love by sorcery. He defended himself from this accusation in his *Apologia;* but in both this work and in his *Metamorphoses*, commonly called the *Asino d'oro* (the Golden Donkey), he admits that the devils can influence man and nature generally.*

Magicians are mentioned also by Pliny † and Pompeius Festus.‡

6. Among the barbarians in Europe in olden times spiritistic practices were common among the Druids in Gaul, and among the inhabitants of all the countries of the North.

That the evocation of spirits was in use among the pagans in the early days of Christianity is attested by the contemporary Fathers of the Church, of whom it will be sufficient to mention Tertullian, Lactantius, St. Hilary, Minucius Felix, and Eusebius.§

In his *Apologia* Tertullian indicates clearly all

* Apuleius, Works, edit. F. Didot.

† *Histor.*, xi. 95.

‡ *De signific. verbor.; Strygæ.*

§ Tertullian, *Apologetic.*, xiii., xxii.; id., *De Anima*, lvii.; Minucii Felic., *Octav.*, xxvii., xxviii.; Lactantii, *Dio. Institut.*, iv. 27; Hilarii in *Psalmos*, 94; Eusebii, *Histor. Eccles.*, viii. 10.

the practices that have been revived by spiritists. In a word he speaks of séances and table-rappings, and where he tells us that the diviners of his time had recourse to devils he says: "*Per quos caprae et mensae divinare consuerunt*"; he speaks of the visions they conjured up, saying that "*somnia immittunt*"; he speaks of materializations, saying that the magicians "*phantasmata edunt et jam defunctorum infamant animas*"; nor does he conceal the fraud that then, as nowadays, was mixed up with their practices, declaring that "*multa miracula circulatoriis prestigiis ludunt.*"*

The Gnostics, in spreading many ideas of their masters, and especially of Philo and of the compilers of the Talmud, gave a singular impulse to the diffusion of spiritistic preaching, which lasted throughout the Middle Ages.†

During the eleventh century malicious contemporaries accused of witchcraft the Roman pontiffs Benedict IX. (1033–44), Gregory VI. (1045), and Gregory VII. (1073–85), who in the *Cronaca Usper-*

* *Apolog.*, xiii.

† Cantù, *Storia Universale*, edit. x. vol. iii. pp. 603–611 (Turin, 1884).

gense (1076) is called the greatest sorcerer of all. This chronicle relates how one day, when Gregory VII. was returning from Albano to Rome, he left behind in that city one of his books on the black art. He told two of his retainers to go back and fetch it, but woe to them if they opened it! The prohibition sharpened their curiosity, and, opening it, they read a few lines; and behold all at once appeared troops of demons, asking, "What do you want? Why do you trouble us? Command, or we will jump upon you." The two boys, thoroughly frightened, did not know what to do or say, but presently one said confusedly, "Throw down that wall"; and in an instant the walls of Albano were level with the ground. The imprudent boys, crossing themselves and . . . recommending themselves to God, hardly had the strength to drag themselves back to Rome.*

Between the twelfth and the thirteenth century a spiritistic cult arose which was partly philosophical and partly religious. Every astrologer or alchemist, says Cantù,† boasted of some familiar spirit obedient

* Cantù, edition already quoted, vol. v. p. 233, n. 60.
† Op. edit. quoted, vol. v. pp. 742, 743.

to his call. Michael Scot (1210–95) invited his friends to a banquet for which he had not made the least preparation. But lo and behold delicacies appeared which arrived from all parts; and he said. "This savory dish came from the kitchen of the King of England; this liqueur from the cellar of the King of France." *

And Dante, in assigning to Scot a little place in his *Inferno*, said of him that

"veramente
Delle magiche frodi seppe il gioco." †

Cecco Stabili di Ascoli (1251–1328) was burned to death partly on account of his spiritistic doctrines. Public professors of necromancy were to be found at Marseilles and at Toledo.‡

For the rest, in the Middle Ages every one was so convinced of the intercourse of the spirits with mankind that besides a few really guilty, many unfortunates who were merely deluded or delirious were mercilessly condemned to death as witches, sorcerers, magicians, or necromancers.

Nor was religious fanaticism the only factor in this

* Ennemoser, *Gesch. der Magie.* Lipsia, 1844.
† Canto XX. v. 116, 117.
‡ Cantù, op. edit. and vol. quoted, pp. 741, 743.

case, as we know from several historians. It was largely due to the fact that it was the wish of whoever held the reins of government to watch over the safety of civil society, protecting it against those who were suspected of using a superhuman power to harm individuals. And indeed the fact is worthy of remark that, while, under pretext of exterminating witches, many innocent calumniated people and many imbeciles in every Catholic country and in some provinces of Italy were violently attacked, very few cases occurred in the States of the Church, notwithstanding the famous and very severe constitutions of Innocent VIII., of Alexander VI., of Leo X., of Adrian VI., of Sextus V., and of Gregory XV. On the other hand, the victims were almost innumerable that in countries hardly Catholic or directly Protestant were sacrificed to extraordinarily wide-spread conviction at this epoch. If religious fanaticism had been the prime mover in this fierce persecution, it would most certainly have been greatest in the States of the Church, where error was less tolerated than anywhere else, and would have been less lively in those nations where every individual was supposed to have his private religious

opinion. And we know historically that this was not the case.

The knowledge of spiritistic practices during the Middle Ages is proved by the numerous contemporary legends and stories, which abound with narrations, invocations, evocations of spirits, demons, and the dead, with enchantments, sorceries, and the like. It is even said of the gentle Virgil that he was inclined to practices of necromancy, and for this reason the divine Alighieri took him as guide in his journey through the first two realms beyond the tomb. And the tales, not yet entirely forgotten, of popular traditions about houses, palaces, castles which had to be abandoned because of dreadful and constant apparitions of spectres, strange periodical nocturnal noises; because of furniture continually moved by invisible and occult forces; because of voices heard from the ceiling, from the walls, from the pictures, from the paintings; because of hanging curtains which moved by unseen agency; because of flames which kindled mysteriously here and there; and because of other similar reasons—all these tales were due to some incident of a spiritistic nature. It is not to be denied that a great deal of this was due to the

popular imagination, to the ignorance and superstition of that time, if not to the fraud of the charlatan.

Credulity in spiritistic happenings rose to such a height in the Middle Ages that one is very often led to doubt the seriousness of certain affirmations and discussions, or the stability and the constancy of human reason. Not even the learned were free in this matter from the most inconceivable exaggerations; and they accepted as true spiritistic material the most unlikely things without discernment and without criticism. And in the works of Goezia (on the relations with evil spirits), and in those of Teuragia (on relations with good and pure spirits),* we find the grossest errors.

On the other hand, during the entire course of the Middle Ages, there was so much discussion about witches, magicians, and sorcerers; so much was asserted and looked upon as undeniable in their regard; so many cases were instituted against them; so violent were the charges brought against many innocent of sorcery,—that it may be looked upon as quite certain that in no other age was the

* Cf. Cantù, op. cit., vol. viii. pp. 276–306.

practice of spiritism more honored than in the time of which we speak.

7. With the Renaissance neither the people nor the doctors gave up their belief in the possibility and in the reality of the commerce of living men with spirits and with the souls of the deceased. The enchantments and the sorceries so frequently described in the poems of Ariosto and of Tasso, and the scene dealing with necromancy to which Benvenuto Cellini alludes in his *Life*, and at which he assisted one night in the Colosseum, prove clearly that in the heart of the sixteenth century attempts were made to evoke the shades of the dead. Giordano Bruno (1550–1600) also, in his *Candelaio*, shows that he was firmly convinced of the possible commerce of the living with the spirits of the deceased.*

The Conte de Resie † states that at Nancy documents relating to the boy Dalhon di Lorena are kept in the Archives. This boy was killed by his father about 1596, and his dead body appeared for a year, animated by a demon. This gave him an appearance of life; he looked like a walking corpse. At last the

* Cantù, work quoted, vol. v. p. 233.

† *Des sciences occultes*, p. 45. Paris, 1857.

body, suddenly abandoned by the invading spirit, putrefied with indescribable rapidity, filling the house with a fearful stench. Delrio, in whose time the event occurred, declares that it could not be more authentic or certain. The legal documents relating to this fact in the Archives at Nancy are attested by the Procurator General Rémy and by a great many other sworn witnesses.

In a miscellany which reached the Victor Emmanuel Library in Rome from the suppressed monastery of St. Pantaleon, and numbered (in red) "59 and 84," is to be found a deposition attested by the nobleman Domenico Denza, aged forty, Knight of the Holy Sepulchre, of unimpeachable morals and highly esteemed throughout Rome. The miscellany dates undoubtedly from the seventeenth century, and the deposition which it contains was made after an inquiry held, by command of Innocent XI., by Cardinal Carpegna, relatively to an apparition which had appeared to the above-mentioned D. Denza. The latter, having repeatedly dreamed of a lady dressed in white, was on the night of April 19, 1683, awakened by a voice calling him, and on opening his eyes, saw before him the very same

figure that he had so frequently seen in his dreams. Denza asked her who she was, and the white figure replied that she was the Marchioness Laura Poppoli Astalli, lately dead, and come to beg Denza to let her husband know that she needed two hundred masses. Denza having observed that he would not be believed, and that he would be looked upon as a madman, the lady laid her hand on the bed-cover, saying, "Show them what I touch," and vanished. Denza followed the advice of the apparition, and showed to his brother, who had come in answer to his call, the burned impression of a hand. Referring to the sworn deposition of Denza, the chronicler adds that the impression of the hand "was strongly marked, that every detail was perfectly distinct; the outlines of the fingers and the extremities were of a dark burnt color, whilst the palm and the remainder of the hand were white. Above all was noticeable a twist of the little finger, a defect that the marchioness had contracted in her lifetime by a fall on the fire when a child. She had always been in the habit of hiding this defect by wearing gloves, and it seemed that Almighty God wished thus to distinguish the hand of the Marchioness, so that

there might be no doubt as to the miraculous imprint. It is certain that her most familiar friends declared at once, 'This is the hand of the Marchioness Astalli.' It seemed too large to be the hand of a woman, but it corresponded exactly to the gloves of the deceased, with which it was measured several times. In this stage the impression was seen and recognized by numerous ladies and gentlemen, by prelates and cardinals, and by His Excellency D. Livio Odescalchi, but by none with more pious and religious feeling than by Her Majesty the Queen of Suabia and His Holiness the Pope." *

The amount of faith given to these accounts by contemporaries is proved by the discussions that parliaments, faculties, and doctors held about them. The power of the magic arts occupied the minds of scientists and legislators until later than 1750. Severe laws were promulgated by the criminal courts of justice against those who cultivated the occult sciences, and many cruel processes were

* *Nuova Parola*, Roma, December, 1906; *Rivista delle Riviste degli studi psichici*, Roma, December, 1906; *Giornale d'Italia*, December 26, 1906, n. 359.

instituted after the above-mentioned year, especially in England, Switzerland, and Germany.*

8. On the American continent the Indians are probably the last survivors of one of the most ancient of human races. And here the first explorers found wide-spread traces of long-existing spiritistic practices.

Of the spiritism with which the savages of the New World were familiar Charlevoix tells us in his *Histoire de la Nouvelle France.*†

Also in Mexico, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, the communication with spirits was wide-spread by means of the practices of *nagualism* (religion of the mysterious secret), which ordained that babies just born should be secretly consecrated to a spirit designated by the name of some animal. However, this did not hinder the children from being taken later to be baptized, so that they might peacefully enjoy the civil benefits conferred on those who professed the religion recognized by the State.‡

* Cantù, op. edit. quoted, vol. viii. pp. 302–305.

† Quotation by Gibier, *Le Spiritisme*, p. 67 Paris. 1891.

‡ Verdun, *Le diable dans les Missions*, Paris (without date), Delhomme and Briquet; I. Lecosta, *Hist. naturelle et morale des*

9. Among civilized races about the middle of the eighteenth century no one dared to deny the possibility of communication between men and spirits. But the scepticism that after the middle of the eighteenth century was rife throughout the world caused the material which had been handed down from preceding generations to be looked upon as mere idle tales. Science believed that it had given its final fiat by pointing out the analogy that existed between certain spiritistic phenomena and other morbid phenomena, and spiritism found itself condemned to oblivion.

Unexpected events gave new life to spiritism, however, and proved how little justifiable had been the unconditional incredulity of modern days, and how premature were the conclusions established in the name of science.

10. In December, 1847, an American family of German origin, belonging to the Methodist Church, had taken up their abode in a house in a village called Hydesville, in the county of Wayne, and in the state of New York. This family was composed

Indes Occident, Seville, 1590; Brasseur de Bourbourg, *Hist. des nations civil du Mexique*, Paris, 1857–59.

of John Fox, his wife and their three daughters.* Two of the latter deserve especial notice, Margaret, aged fifteen, and Catherine, aged twelve. The acquaintance of this family have always declared they were exemplary in their conduct and absolutely incapable of fraud or of double-dealing. Nor would any one who was worthy of belief, at least as far as regards their past, have dared to deny this statement.

Hardly were the Fox family settled in their new home when the eldest of the three daughters married. Not many days after the wedding, quite suddenly and without warning, noises were heard on the walls and ceilings of the rooms next to those ordinarily occupied. In the rooms whence the noises came it was found that the furniture had been moved or overturned, although it was impossible for any stranger to enter these rooms. At the same time the children began to feel invisible hands passing over their bodies during the night. The whole Fox household did everything they could to discover and understand the cause of these

* Emma Harding, *History of Modern American Spiritualism*. New York, 1870.

singular happenings, but without avail. At first they put them down to the practical joking of their neighbors, but finally they believed them due to some diabolical agency.

Little by little the Fox family grew accustomed to these strange noises and events, for, however annoying, they were physically harmless; and the children began to amuse themselves at the expense of their unknown author, to whom they gave the nickname of Cloven-hoof.

One evening little Kate Fox was amusing herself with rapping with her fingers, and had the sudden fancy to invite the mysterious author of the domestic troubles to do the same. At the same instant a similar sound was repeated an equal number of times. The child, astonished at the fact, again made some movements with her fingers, and these quite quietly. To her great wonder, she noticed that for every silent movement of her hands there came one of the sounds of unknown origin in response. The child then called her mother, and pointed out to her that the author of the noises had not only heard but had also seen her.

Catherine's mother, no less than her daughter,

was astounded at the fact, and invited the mysterious author of the phenomena to count as far as ten: and quickly ten raps were heard. To similar demands were then given quite comprehensible answers by means of raps. When the unknown being was asked whether it were a man, there was no reply. But when asked if it were a spirit, clear and rapid blows took the place of an evident affirmative.

Several of the neighbors were called in to witness the truth of the facts that we have just narrated. And to all the author of the phenomenon explicitly declared again and again that it was a spirit. Thus was modern Spiritism born in America, and from the first it was undertaken to enter into communication with the supposed author of the singular phenomenon by means of a conventional language, based on the number of the raps given. Afterwards other means of communication were found.

But the early witnesses of the facts noticed another thing, namely, that the communication with the *soi-disant* spirit became more ready and more sure when one of the daughters of the house assisted,

and especially if it was little Catherine. It was then said that either the spirit had a special sympathy for certain beings, or that certain beings exercised a special power over it. At any rate it was discovered that relations with the supposed spirit were established much more easily by means of some subjects than of others. To those who succeeded more easily than others in establishing this relationship was given the name of mediums, and the capacity for fulfilling this task is called mediumship.

11. The existence and importance of mediums once being recognized, attempts were made to reproduce outside the Fox house the singular phenomenon which had been observed therein. These attempts were crowned with great success, and before long it was known that communication was possible with many and perhaps all the spirits. It was then sought to hold communion with the spirits of the illustrious dead and of the dear departed. The spirits were very complacent, and even anxious to enter into sensible relations with the living. In consequence of which they gave instructions and directions to facilitate evocations

and communications, and asked for the establishment of circles and spiritistic unions.

Meanwhile the number of mediums increased daily, and the practice of spiritism spread as rapidly.

But the Fox family always held the chief place among all mediums, and they believed themselves charged with the mission of spreading the knowledge of spiritistic phenomena, and began skilfully to take advantage of the preference given them by the spirits.

Persecuted by the minister of the Methodist church at Hydesville, who found the practices of spiritism contrary to religion, the Fox family found it necessary to take refuge at Rochester, with a daughter married to a certain Mr. Fish, and she also was found to be a very good medium. There several commissions composed of citizens successively studied the phenomena, and, in spite of themselves, had to confess their real existence.

Serious men, evangelical ministers, journalists, priests, magistrates, scientists, all took a share in the general discussion. The greater part of them remained convinced of the reality of the phenomena

and of their spiritistic nature, in the full assurance that they were not victims of hallucination and that others had not deceived them. It will suffice to mention Pastor Haumond, the correspondent of the *Courrier des États-Unis;* the magistrates Simons and John Edmonds; Talmage; Dr. Dexter; the publisher Laroche Héron; Dr. Mapes, professor of chemistry in the University of Pennsylvania, and his colleague Dr. Robert Hare.

In the beginning of 1852 the cult of spiritism was first introduced into Europe, beginning with Scotland. It very quickly obtained disciples, and then spread to England, Germany, and Russia. But it seems that in Russia spiritistic practices were already known and in vogue among the Mongols, and largely in Asiatic Siberia, as a relic of the ancient Oriental religions. The same may be said of Scandinavia. However that may be, it is certain that the apostles of spiritism were well received everywhere and made numerous proselytes.

Spiritism was imported into France about the same time as into England and Germany; and the first experiments were made almost simultaneously at Paris, Strasbourg, Marseilles, Toulon, and Bordeaux towards the end of April, 1853.

About 1858 spiritism also penetrated from England and France into Italy, very timidly at first under the ancient *régime*, and more boldly when the fresh wind of liberty invaded the beautiful country.

12. As in America so also in Europe, the practice of spiritism created great excitement and discussion. Many looked upon it with disdain as a result of folly or imposture, whilst others pretended to know all about it and thought it worthy of the greatest consideration. As in America so also in Europe, it was made the subject of rigid examination by clever men, among whom figure some very celebrated names. As in America fraud was practised to a large extent either to mystify or to gain "filthy lucre," and this fact, as had been the case with hypnotism, caused it to be regarded not only with uncertainty but with evident distrust.

And as spiritism spread all over the world, it continued to be developed and perfected.

In the early days the spirits would only reveal their presence, and reply to the questions put by the mediums, by means of raps. This was the epoch

of *typtological spiritism*, or spirit-rapping, and of *typtological mediums*. But after a few years the spirits began to suggest and to introduce the medium of writing. Then came the epoch of *graphological spiritism* and of *graphological mediums*.

After graphological spiritism followed *spiritism by invasion*, or of *possessed mediums*. The medium was possessed by a spirit for a more or less lengthy space of time, and thus performed acts as if he were an automaton, after which the spirit took its departure, leaving the medium in his ordinary and habitual condition.

Then followed *visible spiritism*, in which not only the mediums themselves see the spirits with whom they converse, but the latter are rendered visible to those assisting at the *séances*.

Finally, we had the *spiritism of materialization*, or *materializing mediums*. The spirits are either wholly or partially visible, and are, moreover, obliging enough to allow themselves to be touched by, and to touch, those to whom they manifest themselves, conversing with articulate human voices, playing various instruments which either exist or do not exist on the spot, and exhibiting certain physical

phenomena without special preparation—a fact which is very embarrassing to the most learned and cautious observers. The *materialization* of the spirits of the dead is commonly looked upon as their return to a human existence, and is called *re-incarnation*.

It is superfluous to add that the more recent inventions of spiritism have in no way excluded or combated the early practices. The latter are regarded as the complement and development of the former. Nowadays at spiritistic *séances* rappings on walls, tables, and furniture are mixed with writings, noises, voices, visions, palpations, caresses, the passage of various objects, and other similar things which fill the spectator with fear and wonder.

The facts of spiritism have given birth to various theories; but we have no need to study them in this work, which is directed solely to the investigation of the phenomena and their probable cause. Now and again we shall have to touch on these theories as lightly as we may, so as to make our explanations as clear as possible.

CHAPTER II

DETAILS ABOUT HYPNOTISM

1. Natural and induced hypnotism; Psycho-physiological phenomena peculiar to hypnotism; Deep and slight hypnotism—2. Natural slight hypnotism makes induced deep hypnotism easier—3. Hypnotic attacks; Initial phenomena in various cases—4. By what means induced hypnotism is determined; Classifications of Chambard—5. Psychical actions—6. Sensory perceptions during hypnosis—7. Mechanical actions—8. Physical actions—9. Actions due to narcotics—10. Influence of the various hypnotic methods in determining the initial phenomena of an induced state—11. Hypnotic education; Mental hypnosis —12. Successive changes of the various hypnotic manifestations—13. Lethargy; *Lucid* lethargy; *Common* lethargy—16. Physiological details peculiar to hypnotic lethargy: simulation and discovery—15. Catalepsy: its varieties—16. Hypnotic sleep: its physico-psychological conditions—17. Suggestions—18. Suggestions *intra-hypnotic*, *post-hypnotic*, and at a given time; Auto-suggestions; Mental suggestions—19. Suggestions in various hypnotic conditions—20. Objects of the suggestion—21. Natural refractoriness and inclinations acquired by suggestion.

1. THERE are two kinds of hypnotism to be distinguished: the one called natural hypnotism, and

the other induced or artificial hypnotism. In the first, the phenomena which necessarily accompany hypnotism take place without any appreciable cause and independently of the will. In the second, the phenomena are due to some stimulus coming from a determined cause, more or less known and more or less depending on the will.

In natural hypnotism the manifestations can be of very long duration, alternating with states of well-being lasting more or less time. Very rarely does this happen in induced hypnotism.

The objective and sensible phenomena by which hypnotism, both natural and induced, declares itself can be reduced to three: *lethargy*, *catalepsy*, and *somnambulism*. These three phenomena provoked by hypnotism are in some cases found together, for, succeeding one another, they form a series of allied phenomena. Or they may occur alone, as when hypnosis is manifested either by lethargy, catalepsy, or somnambulism separately. In the first of these two possibilities we have *deep* hypnotism, in the second *slight* hypnotism. Deep hypnotism, then, is a *complete* manifestation, whilst slight hypnotism is an *incomplete* or *abortive* form.

Deep hypnotism is the *animal magnetism,* the mesmerism, the braidism of the past. Slight hypnotism as manifested by lethargy or catalepsy is called fakirism, because the Indian fakirs know to perfection the artifices for inducing in themselves one or the other of these conditions with a view to making money. Slight hypnotism, which is manifested by somnambulistic phenomena when spontaneous, is called somnambulism if it occurs during the nightly sleep, and waking somnambulism if it happens during the waking hours of the day. If it is induced, it is usually called *artificial somnambulistic state.*

Slight hypnotism, which is practically *waking somnambulism,* sometimes lasts for weeks and even months; it is a state which may return without apparent cause at fairly regular intervals. During these intervals the subject is very well. In such a case as this the conduct of the subject varies strangely, and in a manner which he himself cannot explain or understand any better than any one else. Dr. Azam of Bordeaux, who studied some of these cases with the greatest care, gave to the state of the patient who was more or less normal the

name of *primary state* or *condition*, and to the state of hypnotic waking somnambulism that of *secondary state* or *condition*.

2. It is fairly easy to induce deep hypnotism by suitable means in those in whom slight hypnotism is spontaneously present. Thus it is that all who possess natural slight hypnotism are the subjects best adapted to present at a fitting moment the perfect condition of induced deep hypnotism, which may shortly afterwards be followed by a lapse into deep natural hypnotism.

It is said that among the cases of natural slight hypnotism the somnambulists are those who present the greater number of subjects susceptible to induced deep hypnotism. This proposition is true, not because the sufferers from natural somnambulism are more susceptible to deep hypnotism than the lethargic or cataleptic, but solely because they are much more numerous than those who are subject to non-induced lethargy or catalepsy.

3. Whatever may be the kind, attacks of hypnotism are more or less intermittent.

These attacks of deep hypnotism, both natural and induced, may begin as well with lethargy as with

catalepsy or with somnambulism. But in either case the initial state of the attack is transformed either spontaneously or artificially into the two others which with the first produce the complete form.

A spontaneous attack of slight hypnotism may be the point of departure for an attack of deep hypnotism if art intervenes to transform either spontaneous lethargy, catalepsy, or somnambulism proper to the incomplete attack into the other two states that are generally wanting.

In deep natural hypnotism the attacks occur for the most part after hysterical convulsions, and then nearly always the deep sleep with which the crisis ends is the beginning of the lethargy which constitutes the prime factor of hypnosis. If the hypnotic state follows lively grief or joy, the attack generally begins with lethargy. But if the access occurs during digestion, or in a condition of somnolence, or in the midst of sleep, the initial phenomenon is generally somnambulism.

In induced hypnotism the initial phenomenon of the attack varies generally according to the means adopted to induce the hypnosis. If the complete form of deep hypnotism is to take place, the other

two phenomena can be quickly made to follow the initial one, with very few exceptions. If, on the contrary, the attack should remain incomplete, remaining within the bounds of slight hypnotism, the initial phenomenon is not followed by any other, except in very rare cases; moreover, it would be very difficult to change this phenomenon into either of the two others or into more than one of them.

4. The means which serve to induce hypnotism in subjects naturally predisposed or in other ways prepared are very various.

Formerly it was considered necessary to have, besides an operator endowed with supposed extraordinary physical qualities, special preparations, to assume determined positions, to make use of passes, pantomime, gesticulations, and the ludicrous motions called *magnetic* passes. Nowadays it is recognized that not only can any person induce hypnosis in a susceptible subject, but as to the means all can be equally well used that are capable of inducing the necessary modifications in the conditions of the imagination, in the state of the brain, or in the activity of the sensory peripheral nerves of the body.

Thus is taken away from the method of hypnotic induction a great deal of unnecessary mystery by which it has been surrounded, and it is proved that no fluid of any kind is necessary to cause hypnotism, which depends absolutely on the special way in which a subject responds to physical and psychical stimuli, either internal or external.

Chambard divides the various means capable of inducing hypnotism into five groups. These groups are, respectively, (1) psychical actions; (2) sensory actions; (3) mechanical actions; (4) physical actions; (5) narcotic actions.

5. Among the psychical actions which form the first group are ranged moral impressions of all kinds, lively pictures of the imagination, the deference paid to an individual, the conviction, spontaneous or suggested, that under certain circumstances the hypnotic state must inevitably ensue. A sudden fright, unexpected joy, or a pleasing promise are always sufficient to hypnotize a predisposed subject. More than once this has been proved by the shock consequent upon a railway accident. A similar effect can be obtained by the conviction that the subject may have of the power

exercised over him by some other person, or of his incapacity to resist the command given him to be hypnotized. Thus Heidenham was able to hypnotize one of his youthful scholars at some distance away and without even thinking of him. He simply told him that at such and such an hour he would go to sleep. Other experimentalists (Loewenthal, Reuss, Berson, Carpignon, Teste, Guidi) have induced hypnosis in their subjects simply by means of a card, a letter, a flower, or even bread-pills (*mica panis*) which were supposed to have been prepared by a certain chemist, whereas they had been concocted in the house where the experiment was conducted. Gilles de la Tourette relates how, whilst he was working at the Salpetrière, he often saw at one of the windows of the hospital a certain Maria, who was very hysterical and a good hypnotic subject. She would be sewing or reading. Sometimes he would amuse himself by saying to her, "Maria, are you asleep?" "No, sir; I am reading." "But I assure you that you are asleep." "No, sir." "I beg your pardon: your eyes are closed, your book is falling; therefore you must be asleep." He would hardly finish speaking before the woman would be in a state of hypnosis.

Among psychical actions is also included the hypnotic capacity of intellectual inertia or mental fatigue. Some normal individuals, by thinking of nothing and making a void in their minds, frequently succeed in inducing natural sleep which otherwise is unobtainable. In subjects who have been prepared or are predisposed the same artifice very often succeeds in inducing hypnosis. By abstaining from thought and imagination, by putting aside the cares and worries of this life, or, on the contrary, by tiring the mind with hard thought and meditation on incomprehensible matters, the Bonzes of Japan and the Brahmins of India often obtain the most "classical" of hypnotic states. In ecclesiastical history mention is made of a set of heretics, according to whom the supreme happiness of man consisted in procuring the beatific vision of God by means of fixedly contemplating their own navel (*onfaloscopia*). For by fixing their gaze and attention for a long time on this hardly æsthetic portion of their body these heretics succeeded in inducing a state of complete hypnosis, which was often accompanied by hallucinations that did much to confirm them in their belief. Surprise at the marvels of spiritism can also

induce hypnosis in a predisposed subject, as in the case of which Charcot speaks in treating of the nervous system.*

6. In the group of sensory hypnotic conditions are contained the stimulation, either rapid and sudden or slow and monotonous, of the organs of sense. A strong light suddenly concentrated on the face of a prepared subject can induce instantaneous hypnosis, as can also a mild and limited light which acts on the eyes, or the protracted fixation of a brilliant subject, or the penetrating gaze of the operator. In the same way a loud and unexpected noise, as the blast of a trumpet, the explosion of a petard, a blow on a large drum, or the deafening vibration of a gong, the monotonous striking of a clock, or the uniform or slow vibration of a tuning-fork, can act as hypnotizers. The same may be said of certain unexpected or gradual touches, whether agreeable or otherwise, of certain pressures, rubbings, or even of elevations or depressions in the external temperature which act correspondingly on the body. I attended one evening a nun ill with typhoid fever, whose temperature

* Charcot, *Leçons sur les Maladies du système nerveux*, complete works, vol. iii. pp. 299 *sqq.* Paris: Delahaye & Lecrosmier, 1887.

rose sometimes to 40°.5 C., and who fell into a state of hypnotism, to the great alarm of her fellow sisters. Bernheim mentions other similar instances.* A caress on the brow, a shake of the hand, a pressure on the top of the head are sometimes sufficient to induce hypnosis. The slight stimulation of certain cutaneous surfaces in the vicinity of the genital organs, or the slight compression of the ovarian regions, may have the same result.

7. Among the mechanical actions which constitute the third group come first in order violent shocks of the body. The violent and rapid turning of the head, as practised by some experimentalists in public performances, belongs to the same category. Secondly must be mentioned the modified mechanical actions of intra-ocular pressure—that is, the compression and gentle *massage* of the eyeballs veiled by the eyelids; and the convergence of the optic *axes*, obtained by inviting the patient to stare at the tip of his own nose, or the tip of a finger placed on the bridge of the nose at a point level with the aperture made by the eyelids, or at any object whatever placed near the fore-

* Bernheim, *Wiener Klin. Rundschau*, November 8, 1896; *Riforma Medica*, January 18, 1896.

head a little above the space between the eyebrows.

8. The physical actions which comprise the fourth group refer to the use of the magnet, electricity, and the electric bath. Maggiorani, in confirming on that head the earlier observations of Hell, the Jesuit, and of Mesmer, has fully demonstrated that many subjects pass into the hypnotic state when a magnet is brought close to them, even when they are unaware of the fact. By means of electric baths (Franklinizzazione) hypnosis may be induced either when the subject is being charged with electricity, or after the charge has been made, when sparks are drawn from him.

9. Of narcotic actions which give us the fifth and last group of the methods capable of inducing hypnosis are those due to anæsthetic substances, as ether, chloroform, morphia, or to intoxicating substances, as alcohol or *Cannabis Indica*. During the period of delirium resulting from the use of these various narcotic substances the hypnotic state is very often induced, a state which the surgeon profits by to perform certain serious and painful operations.

10. According to whether hypnosis is induced by

one or the other of the methods given, the initial phenomenon of deep hypnotism is varied. In general, confidence, expectation, inertia, intellectual fatigue, the prolonged fixation of a brilliant object or the eyes of the operator, the uniform ticking of a clock, the monotonous vibration of a tuning-fork, contacts, pressures, slight passes with contact, the mild stimulation of the genital regions, the pressure of the eyeballs, the convergence of the optic *axes*, the application of the magnet, induce attacks which begin with *lethargy*.

But to obtain the desired effect from the above-mentioned methods a great quiet and calmness are generally (not always) necessary on the part of the subject, whilst the room in which the experiment takes place should be far from all noise and cause of distraction, and be moderately lighted or in semi-obscurity.

On the other hand, an unexpected bright light on the eyes, a loud and violent noise, a sudden shock of the body, a shaking of the head, a sudden elevation of febrile temperature, nearly always provoke an attack beginning with catalepsy. This may be the initial phenomenon when hypnosis is induced

by means of an electric charge, or by the sparks during an electric bath.

In hypnosis induced by narcotics the initial stage is sometimes lethargy and sometimes somnambulism. The first is the case if hypnosis begins during a period of profound sleep; the second if the attack commences during a period of delirium or hallucination. But sometimes the attack which starts during this period begins with catalepsy.

When the various methods capable of inducing hypnosis are combined, then the initial phenomenon depends on the nature of the prevailing method put into operation.

11. Whatever may be the method used to induce hypnosis, the effect will be nearly always imperfect and deficient the first time. It becomes more perfect with the repetition of the experiment. After a certain number of trials, the slightest artifice, the smallest command, the very sound of the voice or the mere sight of the hypnotizer, or even the thought of the subject that he must pass into a hypnotic condition because it has been so determined beforehand, is sufficient to induce hypnosis. This fact has made many say, but evidently without sufficient

reason, that to hypnotize, an internal act of will is sufficient without any outward sign or word (Guidi, Tommassi, Mami). Even in the case of hysterical subjects, who seem to be the hardest and most refractory, a patient preparatory schooling will nearly always result in developing a susceptibility to hypnotic influence.

It is undeniable that the frequent repetition of hypnotic practices, especially of those involving violent methods and severe physical shocks, makes the individual thenceforward more susceptible to induced hypnotism.

12. When once the initial phenomenon of induced deep hypnotism has been obtained, it is very easy to transform this into the two others, so that together they constitute a complete attack.

To obtain a clear and exact idea of the nature of each of these three morbid phenomena which result in deep hypnotism, and to learn how and by what expedients one phenomenon can pass into the other two, I think it would be highly useful to imagine that we have before us an individual susceptible to an induced attack of deep hypnotism.

13. Let us invite the individual to stare at some

bright object placed at a short distance in front of and above his two eyes.

After a few minutes a just perceptible effort at swallowing is noticed in the patient, accompanied by a slight laryngeal murmur; he foams a little at the mouth; the eyes close either wholly or partially, and the patient passes into a more or less profound sleep. This is the lethargic state, which, according to Tamburini, is the most constant and the most characteristic of hypnotic manifestations.

There are, according to Liébault, different grades of lethargy in the hypnotic state.

In the first grade there is no real coma, but merely a state of drowsiness, with numbness of the limbs.

In the second grade there is real coma, but the subjects perceive and realize nearly all that passes around them, so that when they return to their normal state they remember perfectly well all that has happened in their presence during hypnosis.

In the third grade there is profound sleep, but the subjects still notice what is going on around them, but only vaguely, and without remembering anything when they come to themselves.

In the fourth and last grade the coma is com-

plete; the individual is quite isolated from his surroundings, or at the most is in more or less close *rapport* with the person who has hypnotized him.

The first of these grades, which is liable to be more or less feigned, is not to be depended upon as a true symptom, and should not be characterized as lethargy; at most it is but a lethargic prelude. The third and fourth grades we consider as one.

We admit, then, but two varieties—the first corresponding to the second grade of Liébault, the second to the last two grades distinguished by the same author.

In the first of the two varieties of lethargy admitted by us the individual lies immovable, with the limbs inert and heavy and without trace of rigidity, as one who is sleeping profoundly. Moreover, the skin is cold and covered with a slight perspiration; the breathing and the pulse are very slow and hardly perceptible; the general and local sensibility is almost entirely retained; the eyes are fixed, the pupils slightly dilated and incapable of reacting to the stimulus of light. The voluntary motility and the reflex peripheral motility are entirely suspended; the reflex motility of the visceral centres is almost *nil*.

Meanwhile the internal psychical activity continues as usual. The subject perceives everything, understands all, but finds it absolutely impossible to communicate his thoughts or feelings to others. Because the psychical activity is continuous during this stage it has been called by the name of *lucid lethargy.*

Something similar to this kind of lethargy occurs when, in an almost normal condition of health, one is troubled by nightmare during sleep and wishes to call for help, to move or awake, but is unable to do so (*incubo*).

We have classical examples of lucid lethargy in many cases of apparent death, among which I should like to relate the narrative as given by Cardinal Donnet to the French Senate in February, 1866, during the debate on the Burial Laws. "In 1826," he said, "a young priest was suddenly struck down by syncope whilst he was preaching in a full church. A doctor certified that he was dead, and gave permission for the burial to take place on the morrow. The bishop of the cathedral, who had been witness of the event, was already reciting the last prayers at the foot of the bier.

The measurements had already been taken, and all the preparations necessary for the funeral were being made. The agony of the young priest is easily imagined, for he was alive and heard the noise of all these preparations. At last he heard the voice of one of his childhood's friends, and this voice caused him to make a superhuman effort, which had a marvellous result. The next day the young priest could reascend his pulpit. And to-day that priest, then a youth, is with you and stands before you. I am that priest, who implore you to make the necessary regulations to prevent such serious and irreparable calamities as that by which I was threatened." *

In the second kind of lethargy, which is the most common, and which may be distinguished by the name of *simple lethargy, common lethargy,* or *ordinary lethargy,* the limbs of the subject are soft, flaccid, and heavy, and when raised, if left to themselves, fall back heavily. The pulse is slow, the breathing somewhat superficial, but the sleep is calm. Contrary to what happens in normal sleep, the pupils during lethargy are always more or less

* *Moniteur,* March 1, 1886, p. 238.

dilated, but never react to the light. Cutaneous sensibility is evidently absent. One may pierce, strike, cut, burn, the subject feels nothing. The senses apparently retain some degree of activity, but this is nearly always insufficient to materially impress the person placed in an hypnotic state.

The nervous system is more or less in a profound state of coma, and generally the inertia of the mind is so great that it is very difficult to enter into or maintain relations with the person hypnotized, or to communicate an idea to him by any process whatever, to stimulate him, or to exercise any influence over him.

14. According to the school of Charcot, there are in the lethargic state three physical periods of primary importance: (1) exaggerated reflex movement of the tendons; (2) permanent muscular excitability; (3) transitory neuro-muscular excitability.

By reflex tendon movement is meant a motion brought about in a limb by striking the tendon of a muscle in connection with a bone. In a normal condition the elastic motion thus produced has a certain limit which in the lethargic state is much increased. Thus, under normal conditions, if one

were to cross one's legs as tailors are wont to do during their work, and if one were to strike the tendon under the knee-cap, the foot would spring up from 6 to 10 centimetres from its position. In the lethargic state under similar conditions the foot would be raised as much as 15 to 20 centimetres, and perhaps more.

In what does permanent muscular excitability consist? By touching somewhat roughly, or directly stimulating in some other way, a muscle—the biceps of the arm, for instance,—the latter contracts, causing the forearm to bend at right angles with the arm. If one wishes to bring it back to its original state by force, the contracture will not give way; the muscle will sooner break. On the contrary, the contracture will loosen easily by touching or stimulating the opposing muscle, which in this case would be the triceps of the arm. The muscle will then, without further delay or more ado, go back to its original position and flexibility.

If the contraction of a muscle has been provoked in a lethargic patient, who is then awakened without first having stimulated the opposing muscle, the contracture will persist during the state of wakefulness. The only means of relaxing the muscle is

to hypnotize the patient again and to stimulate the opposing muscle.

Transitory neuro-muscular excitability may be exemplified as follows: On pressing with the finger or a long rod the course of a motor nerve, a most singular phenomenon is observed. All the muscles dependent on that nerve contract, and remain contracted so long as the compression or the corresponding nervous stimulus lasts. The subject at once becomes an excellent anatomist, a competent physiologist, and never fails as to what muscles to put in play. It is especially worthy of note that transitory neuro-muscular excitability is always observed as acting under the same laws in harmony with known anatomical and physiological data in very many persons absolutely beyond suspicion of fraud, because they are utterly ignorant of scientific matters, unconscious of the researches being made through them, and moreover subjected to the experiment by observers who are likewise without any knowledge of anatomy and physiology.

We have said that the phenomena recorded are of the highest importance. They are useful to

attest the reality of the lethargic state, and to distinguish true from feigned lethargy.

One who is ignorant of the exaggeration of reflex tendon movement brought about by lethargy, if he wished to dissemble, would not know how to behave. And were he to know the phenomenon, in trying to reproduce it he would be bound to exaggerate in such a manner that fraud would become manifest.

In the same way, one who does not know what are the effects of direct muscular stimuli brought about during the lethargic state, and how these should behave in that state and in the succeeding wakefulness, will not know how to take advantage of an opportune moment to stimulate the opposing muscle, or will forget to exhibit the phenomenon, or will be taken unawares in a moment of distraction by the sagacity of the seeker after truth.

Also, however accustomed and clever in muscular activity one may imagine one's self to be, it would be impossible to exercise with sufficient readiness and rapidity the muscular contraction that takes place during hypnotic lethargy by the stimulation of the nerve centres. For even the cleverest anatomist or physiologist could not say, with-

out a moment's reflection, which particular muscles are exclusively influenced by certain nerve centres, and at what point of their ramification they cease to act on certain muscles, or continue to act on others.

But these signs, which would be so valuable in ascertaining the reality of the lethargic state, and to distinguish true lethargy from a possibly feigned lethargy, are unfortunately neither constant nor characteristic.

They are not constant, because sometimes they are completely wanting. They are not characteristic, for at times they occur during the other hypnotic states, and in some hysterical persons also out of the hypnotic state; whilst in place of them other physical phenomena may occur during the lethargic state which often occur in the course of other phases of hypnotism.

However, it is certain that the three physiological phenomena recorded—*when they exist*—are always very useful in helping to ascertain the reality of the lethargy, or in revealing its possible simulation.

15. A person placed in the lethargic state can always be awakened by being blown on the face. With some hysterical women in a state of hypnotic

lethargy the awakening can be equally well made by pressing the ovarian region.

One can make the subject pass from lethargy to somnambulism by pressing or rubbing the top of the head lightly.

We will suppose that, for experimental reasons, we wish to make a subject pass from lethargy to catalepsy, which is the other of the three great hypnotic states.

To do this it will be sufficient to raise the closed eyelids of the subject whilst a bright light illumines the room. By this very simple act lethargy quickly becomes catalepsy.

There are three known varieties of catalepsy: *simple catalepsy, catalepsy with fascination,* and *ecstatic catalepsy.*

In the simple or vulgar catalepsy, which is the most common of induced cataleptic states, the person is rigid, with an impassive physiognomy, the eyes fixed and open. There is no winking of the eyelids. Reflex muscular excitability of any kind is almost always absent or greatly diminished.

Through want of resistance the joints are very supple, and can maintain any position in which

they are placed, although it may be a very uncomfortable one. This condition is termed *flexibilitas cerea*.

An arm placed horizontally will remain thus, without the slightest movement, for quite fifteen minutes. A pen attached to the extremity of the finger will trace a straight line on a moving apparatus.

The respiration is very slow and superficial, as may be seen from the tracings made by Marey's recorder, which consist of long horizontal lines with wide but equidistant intervals.

These two facts are of great importance in determining possible simulation. In the latter case the tracing of the horizontally raised hand becomes, after a few minutes, an interrupted line with varied breaks and irregular oscillations. As to the respiration, the tracing shows a continued and great irregularity. For the muscular force which the pretender is compelled to exert in order to play his part effectively thus manifests itself.

During ordinary catalepsy the electric current determines, as in the normal condition, the contraction of the muscles on which it acts. But once the current ceases, this contraction does not

persist, as does the contraction of the muscles themselves when a gentle motion of a certain kind is given to the corresponding joint. This fact, also, can help to detect fraud. For unless the pretender is well versed in neuro-pathology, he will be easily caught. Under the action of the electric current he will be obliged to contract the stimulated muscle, but once the electric stimulus ceases, he will continue to retain the limb in the position given to it by the muscular contraction provoked by electricity, and thereby the fraud will be detected.

In common catalepsy the mental faculties are in a state of inertia, but much less completely so than in lethargy. Certain phantasms are still conjured up by the imagination, but they remain quite isolated, or, at the most, are associated in very limited groups, and never have the control of that great collection of personal ideas accumulated and associated for a long time which form the great basis of consciousness properly so called. Thus it is that if these phantasms be manifested exteriorly by any movements, these (movements) will be distinguished by their isolated, unconscious, automatic, and mechanical character. In such a condition of things one beholds

in its simplest form the human machine as sketched by La Mettrie.

As to the senses, the incapacity of feeling physical pain is absolute. The specific senses of resistance, taste, smell, sight, hearing, retain some of their activity; muscular sensibility also remains.

The persistent action of a part of the psychical faculty, as of the senses, allows the operator to place himself *en rapport* with the subject, and to make some impression on his imagination.

In the greater number of the cases, the only way in which we can place ourselves *en rapport* with the cataleptic subject is by putting his muscular system into action. Thus a gesture or an attitude is sufficient to impress the subject with the idea we wish to transmit to him.

For example, if one clenches the fist aggressively, the subject's face will assume a threatening look. On the contrary, if one puts the fingers to the lips and pretends to waft him a kiss, he will quickly put on an affectionate expression. Thus, again, if one stimulates the different muscles of the face so as to reproduce the condition they present in sadness, fear, anger, or joy, the rest of the body will assume

a position in harmony with the phantasms that the state of the muscles of the face will call up in the brain of the person experimented upon.

If one gives to each of the two arms of the cataleptic subject attitudes of contrary expression, for instance, of salutation to the right and of scorn to the left, the two sides of the face assume different expressions--benevolence on the right and repulsion on the left.

The large amount of correspondence that exists in catalepsy between the pose and the expression on the face has given rise to the belief that the sculptors of ancient Greece modelled some of their masterpieces from persons placed in catalepsy.

But however that may be, it is certain that the idea given in catalepsy by the intermediary of the muscular action always remains isolated, without diffusion or association, and fixes itself, so to speak, in the imagination, occupying it entirely so long as muscular action lasts whereby the member is maintained in an expressive position artificially determined.

If the functional activity of the organ of sight prevails over that caused by the muscular stimulus,

or if, during catalepsy, one succeeds in attracting to one's self or to some person present the attention of the subject, by means of a bright light, an imperious glance or noise, or by some other method, and in dominating him by a look, as Brémaud says, then we have *catalepsy with fascination.*

To the other physical phenomena which characterize common catalepsy there is now added an exciting stimulus caused by visual perception and in harmony therewith.

The regard of the subject is fixed on the operator, or on the person who represents him. The latter walks, so does the cataleptic; he lifts an arm, the cataleptic lifts one also; he pretends to drink, he shuts an eye, opens his mouth, puts out his tongue, and the cataleptic imitates each and every action.

If the cataleptic is spoken to, either he does not respond, but moves his lips in a way similar to that of the speaker, or perhaps he repeats the words, but like an echo. He evinces no ideas except those suggested to him by the sight of the person or object, which seem to absorb the little attention he is yet capable of. One may insult him abominably, and not a muscle of his face will move. One may strike

him, and he will show no fight. One may offend him, prick him, burn him, wound him, and he, noticing nothing, will make no response; only, if he sees, he will try to reproduce the actions of the person he is observing, and in a purely mechanical way. But even then he will imitate only half of what is accomplished if a will other than his own does not demand that all be reproduced.

Often a certain degree of consciousness remains, because, if the hypnotic state is interrupted, the subject can recall a great deal of what he has seen and felt, however little he was able at the time to oppose the faint glimmer of will that remained to him.

Sometimes the passive psychological activity will hold out in catalepsy, joined with a certain amount of consciousness, memory, and an abnormal activity of the imagination. Then we have that form of catalepsy called *ecstatic* or *catochus* or *spurious catalepsy*. The phantasms produced by the imagination, acting spontaneously in this state, do not greatly influence the attitude of the person. The countenance preserves the apathetic and passive expression it had in ordinary catalepsy. The local

and general sensibility is suspended or diminished equally in the various organs of the body. Respiration is slow and superficial, the pulse slow, the surface of the body cold and discolored. Nevertheless, *flexibilitas cerea* coexists, with the addition of a peculiar transitory tonic contraction.

In induced hypnotism, catalepsy hardly ever assumes the last of the three forms recorded.

If the eyelids of a cataleptic are lowered, catalepsy immediately gives place to lethargy.

But if, instead of lowering the eyelids of both eyes, only one is lowered, the strange phenomenon takes place of one half of the body being in a cataleptic state, whilst the other half, on the side of the closed eye, presents all the characteristics of lethargy. Thus we have a case of *semi-lethargic catalepsy*, or *semi-cataleptic lethargy*.

As in lethargy, so in catalepsy, the subject is brought to by blowing gently on his face.

16. But if instead the patient is rubbed lightly on the head, somnambulism occurs.

The somnambule has both eyes shut or half shut, and, if left to himself, will appear to sleep. But the rigidity of the limbs is much less than in lethargy.

The functions of respiration and of circulation continue as under normal conditions.

The strong mechanical stimulation of the muscles and the pressure of the motor nerve centres hardly ever gives place to the phenomenon of neuro-muscular hyperexcitability without the help of some outside element; but gentle friction of the skin causes a somewhat sustained contraction of the underlying muscles. This contraction is not influenced, as in lethargy, by the excitation of the opposite muscles, but depends solely on the continuation of the same mild cutaneous excitation which originated it.

A characteristic fact is the increase of muscular force, and of the acuteness of the specific senses. In place of the last, sometimes an almost complete cessation of action in the corresponding sensory organs is noticed.

If a somnambule takes it into his head to get to some place, the enormous muscular force that he will use to get rid of the obstacles in the way is astounding.

The function of sight becomes extraordinarily acute. Through the slight aperture made by the

half-closed eyes, and by a feeble light, the somnambule can easily read the minutest handwriting. But this increased strength of vision is never sufficient to permit the subject to see through opaque objects. All stories to the contrary about the unlimited power of clairvoyance in hypnotic subjects may be regarded as false and absurd, unless they can be absolutely demonstrated as true; and the same must be said of the power to see things placed at a distance.

To an extraordinary power of visual perception may be joined a like sharpening of the senses of hearing, smell, and touch. Acuteness of hearing may rival that of sight so far as to render it possible to hear at a very great distance. As to the tactile sense, while it may become exceedingly sensitive as to contact or to heat, it may also lose all capacity of feeling pain.

In proof of this exquisite sense of touch that is sometimes possessed by somnambules in hypnotism, Dr. Azam relates how, holding a bare hand some 40 centimetres from the uncovered back of a somnambule, the latter moved forwards, complaining of the great heat that he felt in his back.

Another did the same because of the cold felt from a piece of ice at the same distance.

With regard to the functional acuteness of the sensory apparatus in hypnotized somnambules, it must be remarked that this does not affect all the sensory impressions, but only those *en rapport* with the images by which the subject is dominated. The somnambule neither sees nor hears nor feels, except what enters into the circle of ideas conjured up by his imagination. He remains shut off from all exterior impressions, which at the most affect him in a vague, indefinable manner. The fact is peculiar, but not difficult to understand, as we shall see later.

Together with the functional increase of the sensitive organs and apparatus there may also take place a hyperexcitation of some of the cerebral faculties, whilst the greater part of them remain in a state of extreme torpor.

The memory may be excellent both as regards the events of the moment and those of the past. But there is, nevertheless, to be noted this singular circumstance: that whilst the somnambule, during hypnosis, can remember exactly and with great pre-

cision all that happened in his waking state, he generally cannot remember anything that took place during the hypnosis. In order that the subject may recall what he said, did, or learned in sleep, it is necessary that he should be roughly wakened in the midst of his somnambulistic activity or that he should be re-hypnotized. Even in these two cases he will remember nothing, or will say he remembers nothing if he has been so commanded.

Sometimes, also, the intelligence becomes much more active than in the normal state. Brémaud narrates how one of his relations, a pupil in a school, when placed in somnambulism, very quickly solved a difficult problem in trigonometry which before, in his wakeful state, had much puzzled him. On returning to his ordinary condition the difficulty seemed as great as ever.

However, the mental activity in the somnambulistic state is never sufficiently great to procure the knowledge of things occult, of future events, of scientific secrets, or of things of which one could not otherwise have knowledge; phenomena which constitute one of the various forms of clairvoyance, and for which there is not sufficient proof to allow

them to be attributed to a hypnotized subject. It has been related of some illiterate people that they have been able, whilst in a hypnotic condition, to speak languages which were absolutely unknown to them in their normal condition. The assertion is one to be accepted with the greatest possible reserve; and we shall explain farther on how the things really happened in the one only well-authenticated case.

In ordinary cases it is the imagination which dominates the psychic condition. The images produced by it are so clearly represented to the intellect that they may be mistaken for reality. And whilst in natural somnambulism its activity is always spontaneous, or at least caused by interior impressions, on the contrary, in hypnotic somnambulism its efficiency is stimulated only by external sensations with which are associated the remembrance of other previous sensations. By procuring, then, definite sensations, or using suitable means, it is easy to provoke in the imagination of the somnambule any phantasms one wishes.

In every case the awakening of the idea determined by the sensation or action which takes its place will always remain a partial phenomenon as

long as the number of elements brought into play be limited, as in lethargy and catalepsy. Sometimes the psychical phenomenon presents a sufficiently ample diffusion, which reveals a certain tendency toward the reconstitution of the patient's individuality; and then the movements which follow lose their automatic rigidity and become scarcely distinguishable from spontaneous, and even deliberate and premeditated, actions.

Under certain circumstances, moreover, the somnambule seems to possess a kind of will which one never finds in the cataleptic. Still, this will is a very weak one, and perhaps, because of the limited range of intellectual activity, is actively ruled by the phantasms which rise spontaneously, or which already exist in the imagination.

Some facts seem to prove that hypnotic somnambules are aware of their actions and of their ethical bearing.

In the course of hypnotic somnambulism it seems that the singular phenomenon of the *transposition of the functions of the senses* can take place. Professor Lombroso related, a few years back, the case of an hysterical lady who, during some periods of somnam-

bulism following on cataleptic attacks (evidently it was a case of spontaneous hypnotism), completely lost the sight of the eyes, but could see instead equally well with the tip of her nose or the lobe of her left ear. And thus she distinguished not only colors, but the characters of a letter just written. It was very curious to watch her using her substitute eyes. A few rays of light were concentrated for the fraction of a second on one of them, and she exclaimed quickly, "What, do you want to blind me?" And she shook her head, and rubbed the part in question as one would one's eyes if they were suddenly blinded by an intense light.

A similar transposition may take place with the sense of smell.* Ammonia or assafœtida, placed under the nose, will have no result, but if put under the chin instead, the subject will sneeze or move the head in sign of nausea or disgust.

During somnambulism semi-lethargy, and then semi-catalepsy, can be produced by shutting and then opening one of the eyes. The subject is

* Ziemssen, *Patalogia e Terapia Speciale Medica,* Italian version, 1883, vol. xii., part 2, p. 492, in the note; *Fanfulla dello Domenica* (periodical), October 22, 1882.

then a good example of what is called dual cerebration. Whilst one half of the body sleeps, and is immovable in the assumed cataleptic position, the other half is in a state of apparent wakefulness and full activity. And whilst, in this condition, the patient seems to have some sort of consciousness of what happens to one half of his body, he will seem to ignore completely, or nearly so, all that happens to the other half.

The somnambule can, if so desired, remain in this hypnotic condition from twenty-four to forty-eight hours and more. The awakening can be effected in various ways; blowing on the eyes is the simplest, and perhaps also the most efficacious, means.

17. In the course of the three morbid phenomena which we have described as integral parts of a complete attack of induced hypnotism, a singular occurrence may be observed—indeed, one might say a very marvellous one—and this is known as *suggestion*.

What is called suggestion is the insinuation of an idea, the inspiration of a desire, of a proposal, of a determination, of an act. It consists in procuring

by suitable means in the imagination of an individual the ideas which at a given moment he will conjure up so vividly as to make their effects felt even in the involuntary organic functions.

18. The ideas aroused by suggestion are capable of being translated into acts similarly to those which arise naturally or by reflex action of the will. And that transformation of ideas caused by exterior suggestion, as is to be seen during the hypnotic state (*intra-hypnotic suggestions*), may also be observed at a more or less definitely determined time after the awakening (*post-hypnotic suggestions*) without the subject, who has returned to his normal condition, remembering how, when, why, or where the idea arose in his mind. The suggestions which are to take effect at a determined time may be called *time suggestions*.

The author of the suggestion may be the individual himself or some one else. In the first instance suggestions are called *auto-suggestions*, or suggestions from one's self. They may be voluntary or conscious, as when made in full wakefulness or in almost normal conditions of will; or they may be involuntary or unconscious, as when occurring in

dreams during sleep, or in the midst of morbid delirium, or under the influence of illusions, or of hallucinations more or less transitory. In the second case the suggestion is called "common," or "exrtinsic," and for the most part is not efficacious if it does not proceed from the hypnotizer, who is in a position to substitute his ideas for those of the hypnotized subject.

When the suggestion comes from outside the patient, it must be communicated by means of some sensible sign—a nod, a gesture, a word, some tangible impression or modification of the muscular sense. When the suggestion, on the other hand, comes from the patient himself, the image in the mind takes the place of the sensible sign of communication. If this sign is wanting, the suggestion is not transmitted. No scientifically established fact has so far justified the hypothesis of the purely *mental suggestion* of which so much has been said, and in which the thought formed in the mind of the hypnotizer would be conveyed to the mind of the subject by means of a purely mental process and without the intervention of any external sign whatsoever.

19. The hypnotic condition of lethargy is the least favorable for establishing a suggestion. And the reason is this: if the lethargy is complete, as in the ordinary form, then the individual is as dead to the exterior world. If, on the contrary, it is incomplete, as in lucid lethargy, then the mental faculties are sufficiently masters of themselves not to submit to the imposition of ideas from outside.

But in hypnotic lethargy also there can be suggestions, especially of those which are to take effect after the awakening. This happens when lucid lethargy is accompanied by illusions and hallucinations.

Suggestion in the hypnotic condition of catalepsy is much easier. But in simple catalepsy and in catalepsy with fascination the suggestion cannot come except from outside, whilst in ecstatic catalepsy it may come from outside or from the subject himself. In this second case the moving power of the suggestion is contained in the phantasms and the visions that the partially excited imagination represents to the intellect of the patient: here we have real and true auto-suggestion.

The suggestions of catalepsy are very rarely put into effect after hypnosis, but are, almost without exception, fulfilled during the state of hypnotism. And hardly ever does the image or phantasm aroused by the perception of the act or the object that impressed the individual go any farther. If one moves the finger before the eyes of a cataleptic so as to imitate the flight of a bird, the patient will follow the flight of the imaginary bird unless a new sensation comes to alter the course of the phantasms in his imagination. If a well-known utensil is given to the subject, for instance a pair of bellows, he will begin to blow with the same, and will blow indefinitely without the suggestion going any farther. In exceptional cases the hypnotic suggestion in catalepsy may succeed in obtaining the execution of a somewhat complex order, which, however, is always carried out with the rigidity of an automaton; and that, even if it has been repeated many times, may suddenly, at a given moment and without apparent cause, be suspended and cut off in the middle, so to speak. In exceptional cases the cataleptic suggestion is sufficient to provoke hallucinations and illusions somewhat

durable and complicated, accompanied or not by corresponding actions.

Somnambulism is the most favorable hypnotic condition for suggestions of all kinds. In this state the phantasms of the imagination, as well as sensory impressions, especially those which are caused by the circumstances brought about by the hypnotizer or his substitutes, may be the starting-point of the suggestions.

20. The object of the suggestions may be either the organic and sensory functions or the desires, the inclinations, and the operations of the imagination, and even the operations of the intellect and the acts of the will, in so far as they depend on the operations of the imagination and are aided by it.

If it be suggested to an individual in induced somnambulism to vomit or to bleed from the nose, either during the hypnotic state or afterwards, or if it be suggested that he should be blind with one eye or quite dumb for one or two days during the hypnotic state, or maybe afterwards, everything will happen as suggested at the time arranged: the person will vomit, bleed at the nose, remain blind in one eye, and find it impossible to speak.

"You ought to be thirsty," is said to a somnambulistic subject. "Wine is a delicious beverage. Here is some of the best Marsala; drink some and tell me what you think of it, but know that this wine will intoxicate you for half an hour." The individual takes the glass, which is filled with water, or empty, or filled with a nauseous mixture of assafœtida or of the bitterest coloquintida. He will drink or seem to drink, and will find the beverage excellent; he will offer thanks for the courtesy offered him, and for the time allotted will show all the symptoms of intoxication.

By suggestion during the hypnotic state it would not be difficult to procure the singular phenomenon which Lombroso has described as spontaneous in his patient, namely, the transposition of the functions of the senses. As we have already seen, this patient could see with the lobe of her ear, and could smell with her chin.

One can make the subject believe by suggestion during hypnosis that he is another person—one of his acquaintances, perhaps, or even an animal. He will regulate all his actions conformably to this idea. Also, by the same means and under the same con-

ditions, the subject can be made to believe that he is at one and the same time several persons and thus he will perform their different actions either successively or with the two sides of the body. The first of these two cases is termed the substitution of personality, the other double personality.

In favorable conditions of induced somnambulism, one may give a subject four or five white pieces of cardboard, telling him that they are good photographs of friends or celebrated people, and enjoining him to take care of them, and to recognize them as such both during and after hypnosis; and the subject will go out of his way to speak of the likeness of the portraits, describing the vivacity of the looks, the kindliness of the smile, the color of the hair, the elegance of the apparel. Not only will he say this during sleep, but when awake. And if the cards are hidden or disarranged or mixed with others, the subject will never confuse one portrait with another or be at a loss to distinguish the old cards from those mixed with them afterwards. Only after a long time will the images gradually fade away, and the cards appear to him as they really are.

If a person in a state of induced somnambulism is told that he took part in an atrocious crime and that he must suffer the consequences, he will imagine this to be the case when he awakes. And if one feigns to take him before the judge, he will try to excuse his deed, or confess to having done it, resigning himself to suffer the consequences of his supposed criminal act.

If a person in the same state is told to commit at a determined time some crime, an obscene act, a theft, or such-like, or some act burdensome to himself, as the making of a donation, a testament, the repayment of a fictitious debt, he will obey the command at the appointed time and with every appearance of spontaneity, but without any assignable motive. At the most its author will vainly try to justify himself.

Again, if it is suggested to a hypnotized subject that at a given time he shall no longer remember the circumstances of some event in which he took part, or to have convictions on a certain subject diametrically opposed to those he has generally held, and to employ all the possible reasons he can find in its favor, he will obey if the suggestion

finds favor with him. When the appointed time arrives his memory will present the desired gap, and his mind will act in a surprising manner in the contrary direction to that to which it has been accustomed.

21. I said, "If the suggestion finds favor with him," because if the suggestion refers to certain delicate subjects, the patient will, although unconsciously, refuse to act because of the instinctive horror with which certain proposals fill his imagination, even its abnormal condition. In such a case the suggestion remains without effect, and at the most is executed only in part.

If in the somnambulistic state the suggestion arises from dreams which the patient had whilst sleeping, the execution of the suggestion may have the air of a prophecy. But in reality there is nothing prophetic about it, for the individual execution of a suggestion at a given time is solely and exclusively due to the phantasm which the patient has conceived in his dreams during the hypnotic state. Thus the boy of whom Lombroso speaks, who, under an attack of the malady, foresaw the attacks which he would have in fifteen days, indicating

the means to arrest them, could not really foretell the future, but owed the suggestion to himself whilst dreaming, a suggestion which was amply carried out at the stated time.

Persons who are constantly and repeatedly being subjected to experiments in hypnotism and suggestion often reach a stage when suggestions made to them in a state of full wakefulness are quite efficacious. The imagination of the subject does not then seem to create more ideas capable of influencing the will, and receives instead all the ideas or phantasms which it pleases the operator to put into his mind. The suggestions which succeed best in this way are principally those which concern sensory illusions. Gilles de la Tourette relates how, having one day met an hysterical patient who had frequently been experimented upon, he said to him for fun, "Take care, take care, this gentleman has a nose half a foot long." The individual alluded to took him literally, and was much upset. "Oh, how dreadful! What a calamity!" and so on. Gilles de la Tourette continued to make other absurd suggestions, until at last the subject exclaimed, "For goodness' sake, leave me

in peace! I am so tired with being hypnotized nearly every evening that I do not know any more what I am doing. I believe everything that is told me, do all that is asked of me. I do not know where I am; I have no energy, no will. I feel as if I had gone mad."

CHAPTER III

PHENOMENA PROPER TO SPIRITISM

1. The medium and the field of spiritistic phenomena—2. The *chain, table-turning* and *moving furniture*—3. The *dance of leaves* among Indian fakirs—4. Augmentation and diminution of the weight of various objects—5. Music—6. Luminous phenomena—7. Changes in stature of the medium—8. Irritation, caresses—9. Spiritistic conversations, divinations of Indian fakirs—10. Spiritistic writings—11. Spirits which speak—12. Materializations and reincarnations—13. The daily apparition to William Crookes for two years—14. The singular translations as exampled by the Pansini di Ruvo children—15. The instantaneous vegetation of the Indian fakirs—16. Telepathy, marvellous tales—17. Do the phenomena attributed to spiritism really happen? Opinion of William Crookes—18. Reply to objections.

1. In order to form a sufficiently clear idea of the phenomena which constitute the foundation of spiritism, let us assist in imagination at a *séance* given by some of the best and most esteemed mediums. Whether men or women, you will generally find them to be of pleasing appearance,

fascinating manners, and gentle behavior. Cultivated and intelligent, the mediums make easy captives of all who approach them.

Simply dressed, the medium usually receives visitors in his own house. The most cunning eye will not succeed in discovering any trace of scenic apparatus or preparation. There are no hangings; the furniture is of the simplest. If, nevertheless, the visitor still doubts whether the coverings, the carpet, or the furniture may not hide some artifice, he is at perfect liberty to go where he likes, and may choose his own room, garments, position, or anything else.

The operations are usually performed in semi-darkness; but, if desired, the medium will have no difficulty in acting in the full light of the sun, or by any kind of artificial light.

2. He makes those present choose a table, which they may examine as much as they like, and may place in whatever part of the room they choose. He then invites some of the assistants to place their hands on the table in the following manner: The two thumbs of each person are to be touching each other, and each little finger is to be in communi-

cation with the little fingers of the persons on either side. He himself completes the *chain* with his two hands, and thus the hands of all, joined together, rest on the edge of the table.

A silence of a few minutes takes place, whilst all watch expectantly. Then the table creaks, moves towards one or the other side; sometimes it rises from the ground, and finally falls back heavily.

The medium announces that the spirits are present; the hands are raised from the table, the chain is broken; the spirits have responded to the invitation, and can work by themselves. If the chain is not broken, the operators must all remain at the table, and be under the dominion of the spirits for as long as and in the way that pleases the latter, as if they made but one body with the table itself.

Let us suppose that the chain is broken. From various points of the table put at the disposition of the spirits will be heard noises of violent, frequent, and repeated hollow raps. Then the table itself, without being touched by any one present, moves backwards and forwards, rises of itself, and turns, sometimes slowly, sometimes with dizzy rapidity, on its axis, first to the right for a few minutes, and then

to the left. It is transported from one place to another in the room, and swings first on one and then on another of its legs. Then suddenly, without any outside help, it returns to its place, and stops as if fatigued with so much arduous labor.

Then the other objects in the room begin to move about. The stools rise of themselves, sometimes climbing up the backs of those present, or bow to the ladies of the assembly, if there are any present; the chairs dance and jump about, changing places, bending first one way, then another, or standing on one leg obliquely, but without falling, against all laws of equilibrium. The china, the glasses, the candelabra that ornament the room, the tables and other furniture of the room begin a singular dance; they move about and jolt against one another, and mix themselves up in an extraordinary muddle without breaking or being damaged. And if the pieces of furniture on which these things are placed incline much to one side, or if they turn somersaults in the air, the objects do not budge, but remain as if they had been nailed. A clock will leave its place to fall in the lap of a frightened lady; a bronze vase will move in various directions without breaking or

damaging the crystal vases collected on the table, or will run about in the various corners of the room in the direction of some particular person.

The heaviest pieces of furniture in the room—cupboards and chests—creak, move about, change positions, rise in the air, and sometimes succeed in touching the ceiling, and in remaining attached to it for some fifteen minutes.

Among the spiritistic marvels worked by the Indian fakirs, that of the *animated vase* is a common one. This consists of a vase filled with water, which is put on the table in full daylight and in the presence of all. Suddenly, at a sign from the fakir, it moves of itself on the table, oscillates, bends from side to side, and finally rises to a sufficiently perceptible distance without a single drop of water being spilled. From time to time more or less violent blows, as of feet thumping or of hammers knocking, are heard from the moving piece of furniture.

The doors of the room open and shut of themselves, the bolts and the bars not being moved by any one, but as if, with intelligent spontaneity, seeming to help the opening or the shutting of the

doors. The cupboards and bureaus, although shut tight and repeatedly locked, are widely opened after a few seconds without any trace of violence or force. The objects in them leave their places and return again, or pass from one cupboard to another, although tightly closed, and no one can tell how they left or entered. Trunks move of their own accord, turn over, empty and refill themselves, rearrange and replace themselves.

3. The Indian fakirs are familiar with a spiritistic performance which is called the *dance of leaves*. The fakir invited to perform this presents himself at the house absolutely naked, or at most covered with a loin-cloth, and holding a bamboo stick. After the usual salaams, he takes up his position, assuming an inspired pose and chattering some incomprehensible magic words. Then he threads a certain number of fig or other leaves through the middle on so many little bamboo sticks placed vertically in the ground, in vases of flowers, or anything else. If desired, the fakir makes none of the preparations himself. When all is ready, he sits on the ground with his hands spread before him, and at such a distance from the prepared objects that an

adult could easily pass between them and the fakir. After some moments the spectators are aware of a breeze which fans their faces, and the leaves quickly begin to ascend and jump along their respective sticks, and this with more or less rapidity. All this happens without any visible contact between the operator and the objects which are necessary for the operation.

4. But let us return to our medium. Whilst the marvels above related are taking place, some of the objects in the room have lost a great part of their weight, so that, although large and covered with other objects, a child can carry them from one place to another as if they were feathers. Others, on the contrary, although very small, become extraordinarily heavy, so that, although in normal conditions a child could easily manage them, now it takes two or three men to lift them a few centimetres above the ground. This change of weight is but temporary, and lasts only as long as it pleases the mysterious beings that have produced it.

Other objects change their temperature from one moment to another without apparent reason, from cold becoming burning hot, and turning from hot to freezing.

5. To make the spectacle more varied, music will sometimes be heard. If there is a musical instrument in the room, this will play without being touched by any one. If the instrument be a pianoforte or a harmonium, at the most one may see the keys moving, but without seeing the force that moves them. If there is no instrument in the room, in the house, or street even, that does not hinder the music from being heard. Invisible instruments can be heard from far or near at the will of the medium, and the melody will be serious or frivolous, gay or sad, soft or loud, classical or up-to-date, as it pleases him. It will resound in the air, come from the wall, spring from the ceiling or floor of the room, come out of the body of some marble statue, or from the depths of a great chest, which, if opened during the execution of the music, will be found empty but harmonious!

Travellers tell us that the fakirs cannot rival this spiritistic prodigy.

6. But suddenly the music ceases, a noise like thunder is heard, and, as if in an earthquake, the walls and ceilings tremble, the floor undulates and seems to slip from under one's feet, an impetuous

wind invades the room, whilst outside the air is still and quiet. The lights go out, and everything is in complete darkness.

But this does not last long. Flames, sudden darts and flashes of light of various colors run about the room in every direction, until presently plain (homogeneous) light, now bright and dazzling, now dim and low, now continuous, now intermittent, seems to arise from nowhere and pervade the place.

7. Then, to the great astonishment of those present, the person of the medium appears extraordinarily gigantic, only to become exceedingly small, and all this without violating the laws of proportion. The change of stature persists until all present have had time to verify it by touch and measurement. After sundry alternations between the dimensions of a dwarf and those of a giant, the medium resumes his ordinary size, and, sitting on a chair or table, is slowly raised in the air until his head nearly touches the ceiling. A luminous aureole surrounds either his head or his entire person. He remains in this position for some eight or ten minutes, then gently or violently he is carried from the chair or table on which he is sitting, towards one of the

windows of the room. The window opens of its own accord and lets him out, he turns about in mid-air outside, and then comes in at the other window, which opens of itself to let him in. This is done in the sight of all present. The deed is repeated more than once, with slight variations as to detail.

8. Whilst the audience admire wonderingly all that is going on, suddenly the lights which had gone out are rekindled by themselves, and a hot or cold wind is felt by all on some part of the body. A kind of breeze enters by the opening of the garments, inflates the sleeves, the pockets, the skirts or the legs of the stockings, and seems to want to invade the whole person. Then invisible hands tear, move, seize petulantly the clothes of the various individuals; from one a watch, from another a handkerchief, and from a third a memorandum-book is taken. And these objects may be found in the laps or the pockets of other spectators far away from those from whom they were stolen. Other invisible hands at the same time shake the hand, touch the arm, the shoulder, the thigh, the knee of one or another of those present. One is caressed, another

has his beard pulled, or his mustachios or hair; one has his hat thrown on the ground, another has his stolen; with another, again, the face, the hand, the waistcoat are stained with colored matter and with dirt of all kinds. Invisible mouths impress kisses which leave the mark of their imprint. Sometimes these kisses are pleasant, sometimes horrid and disgusting.

Those for whom the mysterious beings, the workers of so many marvels, have a special sympathy, suddenly find their laps filled with bunches of flowers, boxes of sweets, and presents of other kinds, coming from nowhere. Some delicate work hardly begun will be found suddenly and wholly finished.

9. Among the spectators there will be some who ask the medium to put an end to so much disturbance, and to seek rather to try and enter into conversation with the spirits. The medium is too courteous not to accede to the wishes of his clients. At his request the upheaval ceases, and a little table, chosen by the audience, will be the instrument of communication between the assembly of the living and the troop of spirits who have come to the meeting.

The medium invites the spirit with whom he wishes to converse to animate the table chosen. The spirit seems to obey, for the table acts as if it were alive. The spirit will answer the questions which are asked him by little sharp raps, which affirm or deny according to the number of times they are given, or will correspond to the numerical position of the letters of the alphabet.

Thus conversation begins and is carried on, adequate replies being received to the strangest and hardest questions propounded to the spirit who is supposed to be chatting with the living. By this means one may get to know of hidden things, distant events, particular circumstances, mysterious happenings, and, besides finding people who have disappeared, stolen articles, things lost, will justly diagnose internal and complex illnesses, and will specify the remedies to be used.

The fakirs are said to divine by the help of spirits. This they do as follows. A European calls to his house the fakir of the neighboring temple, and, thinking of a favorite quotation, a proverb in the dialect of his own country, a verse from Homer or Virgil, he invites the fakir to write it down.

The fakir sprinkles fine sand on a table, or on a smooth surface, in a narrow line, and places a little bamboo stick near. After a few minutes, to the astonishment of all, the little stick stands on one end, moves and scratches on the sand in various directions. When it stops, every one can read on the sand the proverb or the classic verse of which the European had thought. It was on one of these occasions that Jaccolliot once obtained the name of a friend who had died some years before.

If it happens that the medium who is present belongs to the class of pythonic mediums, the spirits will speak through his mouth on any abstruse matter in any of the most difficult ancient or modern languages, either classical or vulgar, although they may be absolutely unknown to the medium who is working. Or the medium may be clairvoyant. Through him much may be learned from the spirits, who will present to his eyes visions of things that happened long ago, of things that are happening or have happened in distant parts, it may be hundreds or thousands of miles away, which afterwards will prove to be absolutely correct.

10. Some will perhaps wish to have the replies

in answer to their questions written down. It will not be difficult to have their desire complied with. If the medium or some one present takes a pen or pencil, and prepares a piece of paper to write on, very soon the spectators will see his hand convulsively agitated, and then rapidly write words and words and words which form adequate replies to the inquiries made, and discussions more or less rational on the various arguments propounded. It does not matter if the medium or his substitute be illiterate, he will write just the same. Thus he will often write quickly and correctly in an unknown language on subjects of which he does not know the most elementary rudiments, and with varying handwriting, according to the different spirits which dictate the answers. If the spirits are those of known deceased persons, one will be greatly surprised at recognizing their familiar handwriting.

It is perhaps to be feared that this mode of correspondence will permit of fraud, and the spirit is therefore asked to write its replies without an intermediary. And the spirit will acquiesce in this innocent and legitimate request.

A pencil tied to a string within a box on the

bottom of which is spread a piece of paper, or tied to the leg of a table on which are the necessary materials for writing, will soon become active, and give the desired replies in different writing, according to the various languages of the persons speaking.

If there is no pencil or pen or inkstand, the spirit will not be in the least embarrassed, but will write without any of the above implements.

So as to make the production of the writing more authentic, this will take place under singular conditions. A sheet of white paper is shut up in the ordinary drawer of some desk chosen by those present; or the same sheet may be placed between two pieces of slate, or of white marble or glass. In a few seconds, in sight of all, this sheet will be filled with writing which gives the desired replies. But neither the hand nor the pen nor the pencil has been seen. If desired, the writing may be in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Arabic, French, English, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, or in any other language.

With one who cultivates spiritism religiously the spirits sometimes take singular liberties. The spiritist is writing a familiar letter to an intimate

friend about private affairs. Halfway through the letter his hand refuses to write his thoughts and, instead, rapidly writes a sequence of words more or less connected, but quite different from the thoughts of the writer. At the same time another distant spiritist writes a private letter, and is subjected to the same phenomenon. Meeting afterwards, the two involuntary writers find that the two series of words form together a well-connected discourse. Another time, perhaps, the spiritist begins his private correspondence. He leaves the table for a few seconds to consult a book, to verify a date, to look up a note. Returning to his place, he is surprised to find his letter finished, either in writing like his own or in a different hand, either with his own idea being carried out or with something quite different being started, or with something of a more or less witty nature. After some days the spiritist will receive a letter by post, properly stamped, and written in the same hand and the same ink, giving, moreover, the name of the writer (perhaps already dead for half a century) and the place where some unknown original piece of work written during his lifetime has been deposited, begging the spiritist

to find it and verify the similarity of the writing. And thus it turns out.

11. After the writing, the spectators often ask to hear the voices of those with whom they have been communicating.

And the voices are soon heard, coming now from the walls, now from the ceiling, now from the floor, now from the middle of space. And these voices sometimes speak with familiarity, or declaim like orators, or sing different songs. At times it pleases the spirits to mimic the voices of those present, or to paraphrase with shocking blasphemy the prayers which some of them are moved to say.

Sometimes the means of communication which the spirits use to converse with the living reaches a point where the replies become incoherent, absurd, disagreeable, obscene, contradictory, untruthful, or impertinent. According to the mediums, this depends on the fact that other spirits come to mix with those who have been evoked, or that a deceiving spirit assumes the personality of those with whom it was wished to converse; or that the spirit interrogated is offended by some question, or some reply, or something else of the kind.

12. To complete the stupefaction of those who assist at a *séance*, but one thing remains to be done —that is, to see, to touch the spirits with which one is speaking; in a word, to obtain their materialization.

The materialization of spirits, which in some of its forms is termed also *re-incarnation*, is the last of the phenomena that the mediums have succeeded in bringing about. However, this is not always complete as regards the entire person, and it usually takes place without the demand of the medium, or even against his wish and against that of spectators.

In the middle of a *séance*, quite suddenly, are seen in the air, on the tables, under the chairs and about the furniture, human limbs—arms, hands, legs, feet—sometimes very small and sometimes gigantic, sometimes delicate and sometimes gross, sometimes plump and sometimes thin, sometimes white and sometimes dark, sometimes smooth and sometimes rough and hairy. These members possess life, movement, and the most powerful strength. They are either cold and lifeless to the touch, or palpitating like a living and healthy person, or burning as would be those of a person in a state of fever.

Those who wish to try the vigor of these hands, as many have done, will feel tenacious and painful grips which leave indelible marks for long days.

In one of the experiments on the spiritistic phenomena instituted by Crookes, one of these hands plucked a flower with a *long stem* from a plant in the room in bright daylight, and in presence of several reliable and intelligent witnesses, then slowly made it pass through an almost imperceptible crack in a big oak table. Neither the naked eye nor the microscope could detect the slightest laceration in the stem and petals of the flower, although they were at least ten or twelve times larger than the crack in the table.

Complete materialization, that is of the whole body, by certain mediums and by a few elect who may be in their company sometimes, takes place without being sought. Leone Ippolito Denizardo Revail, better known under the pseudonym of Allan Kardec, tells how, going one evening to a theatre in Paris in company with a powerful medium, he observed very many materialized spirits among the spectators, and they seemed to be listen-

ing with great curiosity to the conversation of the audience. Many others were on the stage amongst the actors, whom they seemed to inspire to greater vigor in action, or whom they mimicked grotesquely.

But at spiritistic meetings complete materialization hardly ever takes place except when especially asked for. The spirit evoked then appears in a vaporous and diaphanous form with indistinct outlines. Yet it may be very clear-cut and defined. The aspect, the appearance, the clothes, are those which history, tradition, common opinion, or the memory of friends, attribute to the personality which existed during lifetime. Some spirits thus materialized have a kind and gentle aspect, an aureole round the head, and wings at the back. Others look ferocious, savage, and brutal.

Generally, materialized spirits wrap themselves in long cloaks, so that the body and the head are the parts most clearly defined. They seem to glide as well as walk. But every part of the body is so well reproduced that they are absolutely lifelike.

When spirits are materialized, they allow themselves to be touched, embraced, caressed, or their

hands, which are warm and lifelike, to be shaken; they sing aloud, sit to write replies to those who consult them, give away bits of their clothing or locks of their hair to the spectators who wish to keep them, these being meanwhile suddenly reproduced on their mysterious persons. At other times they are so kind that they allow themselves to be photographed by natural light, by flashlight, or in the dusk.

Very rarely does the spectre appear ready-formed in the midst of the assembly. It generally develops under the eyes of the company.

In their midst, at their request and at the precise spot designated, there first appears a small luminous cloud which, opaque in the middle, becomes in a few moments more consistent. This nucleus becoming more solid, gradually develops a head, neck, shoulders, arms, and then the rest of the body. The outlines, at first shadowy, become more distinct, until at last there appears a person like the others, who acts, moves, and speaks with the company, until it is pleased to disappear. The disappearance causes diverse phenomena. The spirit either returns to the vague mistiness whence it came, or vanishes suddenly

without any one knowing how; or gradually becomes less distinct, or re-enters the floor whilst some one is yet holding it by the hand.

13. Amongst the most complete and tangible materializations on record, the one related by the celebrated scientist Crookes most deserves mention. For two or three consecutive years, by means of a very powerful medium, Miss Cook, he enjoyed the daily apparition of a charming young lady, kind and domesticated, who said she was from India. She wore the whitest clothes and always had a turban. She also came from the centre of a cloudlet, which first formed in the middle of the room destined for the experiment. In the centre of this cloud lines and contours developed, took shape, and became animated and colored until the face smiled, the eyes brightened, the lungs breathed, and the heart beat. Crookes, in order to assure himself that this singular being had nothing to do with the medium, took especial note of the difference in stature, of the manner of dressing the hair, of difference in coloring, in the shape and size of the hands, of the texture of the skin, and, finally, of a scar in the neck of the medium, which was not to be found in the other.

Also, to ascertain if the apparition had a real personality, Crookes took several photographs, listened to the chest, tested the respiration and the pulse, and took the temperature with a thermometer. With her permission, he embraced her, and assured himself that her body was indeed flesh and blood. During the day the apparition conversed with Mrs. Crookes, was familiar with the servants, and played with the children of the house. Moreover, when asked, she declared that she felt all the needs and wishes of other living people. But as evening approached, or whenever she pleased, the mysterious girl disappeared from the sight of all, and no one could tell where or how she had gone. One day she informed Crookes and all his family that her mission was at an end; and whilst Crookes turned to support the medium, who was fainting from grief at losing her materialized companion, the Indian girl disappeared, and was never again seen.

14. At the end of 1905 some of the most trustworthy papers in Italy * divulged, though with some discrepancies as to date and particulars, some

* *Giornale d'Italia*, Rome, November 16, 24, 26, 1905; *Corriere delle Puglie*, Bari, November 10, 15, 21, 25, December 1, 1905.

marvellous occurrences which seemed to have much affinity with the matter in hand. They cannot be lightly denied, having in their favor the attestation of M. Berardi Pasquale, Bishop of Ruvo and Bitonto, of the Archbishop Giulio Vaccaro di Bari, of the Archdeacon Vallarelli di Terlizzi, of the Cavalier Carmarino, magistrate, and of Mellusi, delegate of Bari, of Dr. Raffaele Cotugno, physician at Ruvo, of the pastor Vito Garretti, of an editor of the *Corriere delle Puglie,* of other trustworthy witnesses minutely cross-questioned, and of many respectable persons privately interrogated by us.

We believe some of these occurrences to be of sufficient importance to be related, if only to place them on record. It concerns the Pansini children, in whose home, since 1901, strange and inexplicable happenings have taken place.

One evening the child Alfred, then about seven years old, after having attended some days before a spiritistic *séance,* was suddenly overcome with sleepiness, and this happened several times. During some of these attacks Alfred spoke in a strange voice, like an orator, using languages absolutely unknown to him—French, Latin, Greek—and even

reciting marvellously well certain cantos of the Divine Comedy.

Another evening, during one of these fits, Alfred promised that soon a good supper would be ready. And indeed, as soon as the table was prepared for the family, some Italian sausage and a little more than a pound of cheese appeared on the table. In Alfred's bed some large sweetmeats were found.

By the advice of M. Berardi, the boy was placed at the boarding school of Bitonto, and there passed two quiet years. But even then some singular things happened. If any one looked at him, intending to ask a question—so far only half formed mentally—he wrote the answer unconsciously.

He was one day invited to attend a spiritistic *séance*, at which three of his professors were present. The boy went, but against his inclination. On the table was placed a paper triangle, to mark the letters of the alphabet. The *séance* began, and this is the conversation which took place:

"Will you answer us?"

"Yes; but the triangle must be of wood."

"We have not got one."

"I have already made one, and you will find it in the kitchen in a stewing-pan."

And a wooden triangle was really found in a saucepan. It was very accurately made; at the corners were nails which were neatly cut in half.

"Where did you make it?"

"At Bari"; and he indicated the road and the house where there is really a carpenter's shop.

When ten years old, Alfred left the boarding school to go home; and then new phenomena took place, in which his little brother Paul, aged eight, took part.

The boys were at Ruvo one morning at 9 o'clock, and at 9.30, without knowing how or why, they found themselves at Molfetta, before the convent of the Capuchins.

Another day the Pansinis, wishing to dine at 12.30, sent little Paul to fetch some wine. They waited a good half-hour for his return, and at the end of that time sent Alfred to seek him. At one o'clock both the boys found themselves in a boat on the sea near Barletta, just before Trinitapoli. The children began to cry, and then the boatman, who said he had been paid by some unknown individ-

ual, turned back and made them land. A coachman who knew them found them and took them back to Ruvo, where they arrived at 3.30 of the same day.

After which, very often in a few minutes and in various ways, the boys have found themselves successively at Bisceglie, Giovinazzo, Mariotta, Terlizzi; from whence they have returned to Ruvo either by help of friends of the family or by means of the public authorities.

One day the two boys were in the Piazza di Ruvo at 1.35 o'clock, and at 1.45, about ten minutes afterwards, were at Trani, before the door of the house of one of their uncles, Signor Girolamo Maggiore. Passing into an hypnotic state, and being questioned, Alfred replied to many difficult questions, to the amazement of all. Among other things which he announced, he said that he would not be able to leave on the morrow, but only after fifteen days. The next day his uncle's horse was ill, and the aunt then hired a vehicle to take the nephews back to Ruvo. But hardly had they reached their parents than they disappeared afresh, and were again found at Trani. Being taken back to Ruvo,

they disappeared yet again, and were found at Bisceglie, whence it was concluded to be useless to fight against supernatural forces, and they were reconducted to Trani to await the end of the fortnight.

Much troubled by these events, the mother of the boys took her sons to Monseigneur Berardi, begging him to take Alfred back to the boarding school. Whilst the lady and the prelate were talking, they turned to call the children, but they had again unaccountably disappeared.

The substance of the greater part of these singular phenomena was told me by a relation of the same Alfred Pansini through the courtesy of Monsieur Berardi, to whom I am greatly indebted.

15. Among the wonderful operations which the Indian fakirs perform and attribute to the spirits is to be recorded that of hastening vegetable growth. Jaccolliot relates * what he has seen done in full daylight by a fakir whom he met by chance near Benares.

"I meant to take him by surprise," he said, "and on his arrival told him it was my desire to see the

* *Spiritisme dans le monde.* Paris: Librairie Internat., 1879.

miracle of the immediate germination and the speedy growth of the plant.

"'I am at your service,' he replied to me in all simplicity. I was somewhat disconcerted by this assurance, but replied quickly—

"'Will you let me select the earth, the vase, and the seed that you are going to make germinate under my eyes?'

"'The vase and the seed, yes; but the earth must be taken from an ants' hill, and finely pounded.'

"I told my domestic to provide the earth indicated, and to prepare it as the fakir had said; also to bring me a flower-vase, with a handful of different kinds of seed. In less than a quarter of an hour my domestic had returned, bringing all the objects demanded. I took them from his hand, and then sent him away, not wishing to let him hold any intercourse with the fakir. Taking the earth from my hand and placing it in a vase, the fakir sprinkled it slowly with a little water, reciting I know not what prayers. Then he begged me to give him the seed I had chosen, and some yards of any kind of stuff. I casually took a poppy-seed, and asked permission to mark it. Receiving a reply in the

affirmative, I made a tiny little notch in the outer covering of the seed and gave it to him, with some yards of white muslin.

"'Now I will sleep with the sleep of the spirits,' said the fakir to me; 'swear not to touch my person or the vase I have prepared.'

"I promised what he asked me. He then planted the seed in the earth, which the water had reduced to the state of mud; then, directing his stick to the edge of the vase, he covered it up entirely in the muslin I had given him. Then he bent his body forward, spread his two arms horizontally over the preparations, and gradually passed into a complete state of catalepsy. He stayed thus for two hours without the slightest movement or muscular tremor to indicate the presence of life. Quite naked, with a body shining and tanned by the sun, and eyes open and fixed, the fakir resembled a bronze statue in a pose of mystic invocation. I did not lose sight of him for one instant. After two long hours of waiting, when the sun touched the horizon, the fakir gave a gentle sigh and returned to life. He beckoned to me to go nearer, and, unwrapping the muslin which covered the vase, showed me a fresh

and green young poppy plant about 20 centimetres high. Guessing my doubts, the fakir shook the earth, which had become quite dry again, off the tender plant, and on one of the two husks of the seed, which still adhered to the root, showed me the notch which I had made two hours before. No substitution had been possible, because he was absolutely naked, because he could not tell that I had chosen a poppy-seed, and because I had never once let him go out of my sight. After enjoying the sight of my amazement for some moments, the fakir said, with an air of badly dissembled pride, 'If I continued the evocation, in eight days the poppy would flower, and in a fortnight bear fruit.'"

16. In close affinity, if not identical, with spiritistic manifestations are those singular phenomena which, some years ago, Flammarion described under the name of *telepathy*.* In these the apparitions are unsought for, and are manifestations either of persons deceased, or of living persons who are far away and who by this means wish to make known to certain other persons the condition, generally of a sorrowful character, in which they find themselves; or they

* *Urania*, pp. 110–136. Milano: Sonzogo, 1890.

may be visions which an individual in one place has of events happening some di tance off.

One of the oldest classical examples of telepathy is related in an ancient inscription discovered a few years back, reproducing a letter of the philosopher Epicurus (342–270 B.C.). His mother had had strong visions of absent people, with predictions of events which afterwards came to pass. The philosophic son tried to reassure his mother, who was much upset by what had occurred.*

A case given by Cicero † is noteworthy. Two friends staying at Megara were lodging in separate apartments. One of them in a dream saw his friend, who begged him to come to his help against assassins. He awoke, but took no notice of the dream, and went to sleep again. But the dream was repeated a second and a third time. Finally, his friend appeared to him with torn clothes, and bleeding at the chest, reproaching him for not coming to help him in spite of his urgent prayers. He concluded by saying, "At daydawn my corpse will be carried out of the city in a rubbish cart. Verify what I say

* Geffcken, *Preussische Jahrbücher*, December, 1905.
† *De Divinat.*, i. 27.

to you, punish the assassins, and pay me funeral honors." Struck by the persistency of the dream, the friend at length believed it. He left his bed, and hurried to the gate of the city. Here he found the rubbish cart, and stopped the driver. Among the rubbish with which the cart was loaded was found the body of the assassinated traveller.

The famous Appollonius Tyanæus (4 B.C.—96 A.D.), being in Alexandria, saw the Emperor Domitian stabbed in Rome, and announced the fact to those who happened to be talking with him. News received later confirmed the truth of his statement.*

Two splendid examples of telepathy are narrated by Petrarch in a letter to Giovanni d'Andrea, of Bologna, dated December 27, 1342.† He says of the events to which he refers that "the witnesses still live who heard the dreams related by me, and afterwards saw their accomplishment."

In the first instance, he tells of a young man, his dearest friend, who was seriously ill, and given up by the doctors. "One night," says Petrarch, "when I

* F. D. Guerrazzi, *Prolegomeni all' Assedio di Roma.*
† *Epistole,* Book V., lett. 7*a*.

had been sleepless until dawn, my tired eyes finally closed, and I had a melancholy dream. My friend appeared to me, and I, on seeing him, cried out so that my companions were awakened from their sleep. And my friend tried to dry my tears, and to comfort me for a sorrow which was without cause. He said to me, 'Be quiet; I know already what you wish to say. But some one is coming to stop our conversation. I pray you, make him believe that there is hope of my recovery; be assured that if I am not forsaken I shall not die of this sickness.' And just then I heard a noise at the door of my room; the dream vanished, and I awoke. I turned round; it was scarcely dawn. Beside my bed I saw one of the two doctors who was my friend, and who, despairing of the other's life, had come to comfort me. To him, then, who was full of friendship and indulgence for me, I turned with the most earnest petition that he would return to my sick friend, that he would not give up all hope, for my friend, being so young, was not to be despaired of whilst a single thread bound him to life. But the doctor, with a melancholy look and marvelling at my vainly importunate solicitations, replied that he professed the art of curing and

not of resuscitating, that he was a doctor and not a god. And I, still overcome by tears, revealed to him what I had seen during the night, and begged him to do his utmost. At last, much against his will, he went, and shortly afterwards returned with a few words of hope. After him all the others who had abandoned him returned, and thus my friend was given back to me from the jaws of death."

Relating the other case, Petrarch, after having expressed his profound and devoted friendship for Giacomo Colonna, Bishop of Gascoigne, says, "I had heard something said about the state of his health. Wavering between fear and hope, I daily expected some messenger. I tremble with horror when I think of it. One night I dreamed of him. He was alone, and about to cross a stream that flows in a certain garden. I ran to meet him, and overwhelmed him with questions—whence he came, where he was going, why so fast, and why alone. But he did not reply to any of these questions, but quietly, and smiling as he used to do, he looked at me. 'Do you remember,' he said, 'how the storms in the Pyrenees upset you when you stayed with me beyond the Garonne? Well, they annoy me. I am going to

Rome, to return no more.' Speaking thus, he came to the end of the garden. I begged him to take me with him. But he stretched out his hands once or twice and gently pushed me back, when suddenly his look and his voice changed. 'It is enough,' he added; 'I do not wish to have you now as a companion.' I looked at him fixedly, and understood by the pallor of his face that he was dead. Filled with anguish and fear, I screamed, and, awaking at the same moment, I heard the last echo of my scream. I wrote the whole occurrence down, with the date, narrating it to those present. After twenty-five days I received the news of his death, which I find happened on the same day that he appeared to me. Three years afterwards (without my knowledge) his remains were transferred to Rome."

Theodore Agrippa d'Aubigné * relates the following: "On December 23, 1574, the Cardinal de Lorraine died in Avignon, where at that time the King was with his court. Late in the evening the Queen, Catherine de' Medici, was in bed, and conversing with some ladies and gentlemen. She was about to give them leave to go, when suddenly she raised her-

* *Histoire universelle.* Paris, 1616.

self on the bolster, and, hiding her face behind her hands, called for help, pointing out the figure of the cardinal, which stood at the foot of the bed, holding out his hands to her. The apparition remained a few minutes. The King sent one of his gentlemen to the cardinal's house, and thus learned of the latter's death a few minutes before."

Immanuel Kant, after making careful inquiries on the subject, narrates the following episode from the life of Swedenborg, the great precursor of spiritism in Scandinavia:* "On July 10, 1759, Swedenborg, then seventy-two years old, returning from a journey through England, disembarked at Gottenburg, some 200 kilometres from Stockholm, his residential city. He went to stay with a friend, at whose house a large and select circle of people gathered together every evening; but the evening of his arrival, towards six o'clock, Swedenborg, who had left the house, returned pale and upset, saying that at that very moment a fire had broken out in Stockholm in the very street in which he lived, and that his house was threatened. He went out again, and

* Kant, Works, vol. iii. p. 88; id., *Letters to Carlotta Knobloch*, August 18, 1768.

again returned, lamenting the fact that the house of one of his friends had been reduced to ashes, and that his own was in great danger. Going out a third time, he returned about eight o'clock, and said joyfully, 'God be praised, the fire was extinguished three doors above mine.' The news spread all over the city, which was much agitated, because the governor himself had paid great attention to the story, and many people were alarmed as to the safety of their friends and of their property. After two days, news of the fire came from Stockholm, which tallied exactly with the description already given by Swedenborg. The fire had been put out at eight o'clock."

The novelist, Alexander Dumas,* relates the strange way in which he learned of the death of his father:

"Towards eight o'clock my cousin Marianna put me in the little bed which faces the big one, and I fell into tha beautiful sleep which God gives to children like the fall of dew in the spring. At mi - night I was awakened—or, rather, we were both

* Dumas, *Mes Mémoires* (Paris, 1851); *Le Phare* (Liegi, 1871), n. 17.

awakened, my cousin and I—by a loud knock at the door. A night-light burned on a little table. By this light I saw my cousin rise up in bed, thoroughly frightened, but without making a noise. No one could have knocked at that inner door, for the two others were shut. But I, who tremble to-day as I write these lines, on the contrary, felt no fear. I got out of bed and ran to the door. 'Where are you going, Alexander?' asked my cousin—'where are you going?' 'You see,' I answered quietly, 'I am going to open the door to papa, who has come to say "good-bye."' The poor girl, quite frightened, jumped from her bed, and, seizing me as I stretched my hand toward the door-handle, pulled me back to bed by force. I struggled in her arms, calling out in a loud voice, 'Good-bye, papa—good-bye, papa.' Something like a breath passed over my face, and calmed me. Nevertheless I went to sleep again, with my eyes full of tears and the sobs still choking me. When it was morning they came to awaken me. My father had died at the precise moment that I had heard the loud knocking at the door. Then I heard these words, without exactly knowing what they meant: 'My poor son, your papa, whom

you loved so much, is dead.' Who said these words which told me I was an orphan at three and a half years? It is impossible for me to guess. Who announced to me the greatest misfortune of my life? I do not know."

Still more astounding is the following circumstance, narrated by Gougenot de Mousseaux in his book on the *Great Phenomena of Magic,* published in Paris in 1864:—

"One day while Robert Bruce, the second in command on a passenger vessel near Newfoundland, was sitting in his cabin, he suddenly saw a stranger sitting in the captain's seat. Surprised at this, he left the room to go and tell the captain, but on his return could find no one. Instead, he found on the slate which was reserved for nautical calculations these words, written in an unknown hand: 'Steer to the north-west.' Overcome by curiosity, he obeyed the mysterious command, and after three hours' voyage, discovered a shipwrecked boat full of people in imminent danger of drowning. The vessel took the poor shipwrecked travellers on board. When one of them gained the deck, Bruce with a thrill of surprise recognized the mysterious

stranger. Then, with the captain, he asked him to write on a slate the words, 'Steer to the north-west.' The handwriting corresponded exactly with that on the captain's slate. The author of the writing could give no explanation of the fact. But the captain of the shipwrecked vessel related how towards midday the passenger in question had gone fast asleep. Waking up after an hour, he had said to him, 'Captain, we shall be saved this very day. I dreamed I was on board a vessel that is coming to our help.' And he described the ship and its rigging, which, with great astonishment, we recognized as exact. And the passenger himself added, 'The strangest thing is, that there is something very familiar about this boat, and yet I cannot in the least remember having been here before.'"

The narrative of the following incidents was published in Turin in June, 1873, by the cavalier Rinaldo dall' Argine, of Florence. He relates that in 1871 Virginius Castellani was the chief magistrate in Langhirano, a large town in the province of Parma. Left a widower with a liltle daughter named Antonietta, he had confided her to the care of his deceased wife's parents, Councillor Livio Testi and

Maria Antonietta Rossi, who were very fond of the child. Every Saturday the father went to Parma to see his little girl and to spend a few happy hours with her; and every Saturday, when the time came round, the child placed herself at the window to watch for her father's arrival, and did not leave her post except to run and meet him. Meanwhile Castellani, being in Langhirano, a town of considerable mercantile importance but without a theatre or club-house, used to go of an evening to the principal hotel of the place, to chat with his friends or have a game at cards. It was generally late when he left, accompanied by one of the hotel servants. However, on the evening of April 28, 1871, this servant seemed so tired and sleepy that Castellani did not insist on his accompanying him, and went home quite alone. Arrived at his door, hardly had he finished knocking when a man who had been lying in wait fell upon him like a wild beast, gave him a thrust in the groin, and disappeared. Just then half-past twelve chimed.

The same evening at Parma, towards eleven o'clock, the Testis went to bed with the little grandchild, who slept in the same room with them, and

soon all three were sleeping peacefully. They slept for some time, when suddenly the old people were awakened by the cries of the little girl. Hastily they left their bed and lit the lamp. The little Antonietta, who was then only four and a half years old, was sitting upright in bed, screaming with all her might, "Daddy, daddy! oh, my poor daddy!" Just then the half-hour after midnight chimed.

The two grandparents called and shook the child, but she did not reply. She sat upright in her crib, with an agitated look on her innocent little face, as if she were still dreaming some bad dream, and did not hear her grandparents' questions or make any reply to them. They laid her down again; she did not speak, but became calm, and slept peacefully for the rest of the night. It was the first time that such a thing had happened to the Testis, and they could not get over their astonishment. The anguish and despair in the child's tone as she called for her father had much impressed them.

"If I believed in presentiment," said the wife, "I should say something had happened to Castellani."

"We will not imagine foolish things," replied the councillor; "if old people like ourselves can dream,

why not children? Antonietta has had a nightmare, which frightened her."

They lay down again, and went to sleep quietly. The next morning, hardly had they risen before they received the news of the assassination of their son-in-law, with all particulars. The poor little orphan was kept ignorant of the fact, and such great precautions were taken that she did not hear of it for a long time. Castellani had been assassinated on Friday night; had this not happened, he would have been expected as usual on the Saturday at Parma. The child arose some time after her relations had been up and heard all about the tragedy at Langhirano. But, strange to say, she no longer mentioned her daddy; nor did she ask, as she had always done, to be placed at the window to watch him arrive from the distance. From that fatal night the child never mentioned him or waited for him. It seemed as if some supernatural voice had told her of her father's death. Nevertheless, some four days after the sad event, she was found standing in front of one of the windows absorbed in herself and exclaiming, "Yes, daddy; me too, daddy," as if she had seen her father in space, and

were speaking to him. These facts are absolutely true, and in Parma are known to all.

In the *Raccoglitore medico* of Forli * is reported an observation of Dr. G. B. Ermacora, relative to two very important cases of telepathy, with independent objective perceptions. A certain Signora di Rovigo, one morning very early, suddenly saw one of her brothers who she thought was at Cairo, but did not know had already died twenty-seven hours before. At the same time a sister who lived with her heard some one walking about the room and remove her clothes, which she had placed on a chair near her bed, and which later she found thrown on the floor near the door. Each of the two sisters thought that the strange brother had suddenly returned to his country and home, and had gone out again on business. They prepared dinner for him at the usual hour, but naturally in vain. Dr. Ermacora observes that the two sisters were not subject to hallucinations; that the two phenomena took place under different circumstances; and that the objective reality of one at least was partly confirmed by the clothes being thrown on the floor.

* *Raccoglitore medico di Forli*, January 10, 1897, p. 20.

Whence he concluded that it is not permissible to attribute it to a fortuitous coincidence of two parallel hallucinations, but that it must be regarded as twofold supernatural perception of one and the same event which had previously taken place in a distant town—in Cairo—namely, the death of the brother of the two ladies.

We may be pardoned for being somewhat lengthy in the narration of these different cases of telepathy. The importance of the argument needs the testimony of well-known persons, of all classes and all times. We do not pretend absolutely to guarantee the full objective truth of the alleged tales. But we believe it our duty to declare that we have not the least reason or right to impugn them, or to raise any doubt or suspicion. What interest could the authors of these tales have to relate one thing for another? They declare that they are relating truthfully things that really happened. Why should we not believe their words? With perpetual doubt, what historian shall we then accredit? The details of the facts given are sufficient to preclude all danger of illusion or hallucination. But let us turn to spiritism.

17. In reading the above summary of all the

spiritistic marvels some one may think he has before him a chapter of some fantastic romance, or at least some novel more or less ingeniously put together. But that the singular events briefly related by me from the works cited, and the accurate narratives of those who have studied the subject, are true, is evidenced by an almost infinite number of witnesses.

From some statistics presented to the second Spiritistic Congress, held at Paris in 1889, and at which 500 delegates, the representatives of 40,000 members of various spiritistic societies of which the names are given, were present, it may safely be concluded that the number of the witnesses of the various occurrences set forth by us ought to be at least six million individuals. Perhaps the Congress exaggerated when it put the number from twelve to fifteen millions and more.*

To these must be added all those who testify to the reality of spiritistic phenomena from their first well-ascertained historical origin between 1847 and 1889, and those who from that time to our own days

* *Il Vessillo Spiritista* (magazine), July, 1891.

continue to confirm the truth of what is asserted with regard to their predecessors.

The spiritistic marvels worked by the Indian fakirs are guaranteed as true, not only by Jaccolliot,* who spent many years of his life in India, but also by the missionary Huc,† by Eugene Nus,‡ by Olcott,§ and by many other Europeans, who were altogether astounded by the performances.‖ In a word, there is such a number of witnesses that one cannot absolutely set them aside without evincing an unreasonable sceptical bias; especially as perhaps none of these witnesses were converted to spiritism without having carefully tested it, and experienced its effects.

Among them are members of all nations. We find Americans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Danes, Dutchmen, Scandinavians, Germans, Russians, Spaniards, Portuguese, and Italians, besides Egyp-

* Jaccolliot, work cited; id., *La Bible dans l'Inde.* Paris. 1869.

† Huc, *Souvenirs d'un Voyage dans le Tartarie et le Thibet.* Paris, 1857.

‡ Nus, E., *Choses de l'autre monde.* Paris, 1880.

§ Olcott, *Catéchisme boudd,* French translation. Paris, 1883.

‖ *Revue Britannique,* vol. xxxii. p. 398; *Dictionnaire Larousse,* article "Fakir."

tians and Indians. As to their beliefs, we have Mormons, Atheists, Materialists, Rationalists, Orthodox, Schismatics, Protestants, and also Catholics.

That peoples or large numbers of a nation or religion should agree to testify, in this century of doubt and scepticism, as an objective reality what is something merely imaginary, is not only improbable, but also impossible. But countless legions derived from different peoples, of different religions, tendencies, aspirations, of varied and perhaps opposite characters and interests, agree in holding as truth, not only in substance but in minutest details, events which, some say, have been deliberately invented.

As for us who live in Italy, we have no need to seek far for witnesses to these phenomena. We have them in our midst, in every province, city, country, and village, in the most enlightened as in the most benighted parts of the Beautiful Country, in the sections devoted to commerce as in those farthest removed from social activity.

Neither are these matters merely whispered. They are publicly discussed at gatherings, in salons, in the papers published to propagate spiritistic doc-

trines, and they are mentioned without mystery, because convinced spiritists have seen the things they believe. They themselves have published their names with their respective places of residence, inviting the curious to verify for themselves the truth of the occurrences they relate, and several journals and magazines have reproduced these indications. "Come and see," they have said. And not a few, responding to the invitation, have been obliged to admit as undeniable the truth of the wonders told them.

It might be thought that among the witnesses given only light-headed people, foolish subjects, and incompetent persons might be numbered. We admit that this may be true with a large number, but we hasten to add that, in Italy and elsewhere, amongst those who testify to the real existence of marvellous spiritistic phenomena there are many superior people. Indeed, not a few among them occupy eminent positions in their respective spheres as journalists, novelists, literary men, professors, mathematicians, astronomers, geologists, doctors, chemists, anthropologists, naturalists, philosophers, theologians, magistrates, politicians, diplomatists,

and sociologists.* And it is worthy of remark that Napoleon III., who certainly was not a simpleton

* For those who desire names, we add a list given by G. Athius (*Idea vera dello Spiritismo.* Turin: tip. Foà and Comp., 1895) from indications scattered in the book of P. Gibier (*Le Spiritisme.* Paris: Dorn, 1891), and from other sources: Vittorio Meunier, publisher; Laroche Héron, publisher; Carlo Lomon, dramatic author; Walter Scott, novelist; Augustus Vacquerie, man of letters; Victor Hugo, novelist; Massimo d'Azeglio, scholar, artist, politician; Victorien Sardou, dramatist; Prof. Scarpa; Prof. Vespasiani; Prof. Damini; Prof. Macchia; G. Mazzini; Napoleon III.; Terenzio Mamiani; Prof. Angelo Brofferio; Prof. Giuseppe Gerosa; Chiaja Ercole; Bianchi; Morelli Gabriele; Romanelli; Verdinois; Finzi; Ermacora; Scozzi; General Ballatore; Prof. Hoffman; Doctor Dexter; Talmage; Wynne, mathematician; Augustus de Morgan, President of the Society of Mathematicians in London; Swedenborg, one of the leaders of spiritism, but also mathematician, physician, naturalist, and astronomer; Lodge, mathematician and physician; Flammarion, astronomer; Zoellner di Lipsia, astronomer; Challis, astronomer; Barkus, geologist; Douton, geologist; A. Y. Tyndal, physician; Ochoronwitch, physician, inventor of the thermomicrophone; Thury, of Geneva, physician; Fechner, physician; Buttleroff, of St. Petersburg, chemist; Hare, chemist; Carus, physician and psychologist; Cuookel, physician; Du Prel; Gibier; Tamburini; Limoucelli; Ascensi; Vizioli; Ciolfi; Peuta; Luciani; Capuana; Mapes, chemist; Humphry Davy, chemist; L. Ferri, anthropologist; Morselli, anthropologist; C. Lombroso, anthropologist; Wagner, zoologist; Perty, naturalist; Richardson, naturalist; Humboldt, naturalist; D. Seeton, physician, geographer, and geologist; Carlo Richet, physician and physiologist; James M. Cully, physician; Schiapparelli, philosopher; Filopanti, philosopher and mathematician; Abbot Garo, canon at Nancy; Abbot Rocha; Flournoy;

or anxious to pass for one, was astounded at the surprising manifestations which took place in his presence and in that of his court by the experiments of Dr. Home, the greatest precautions being taken to prevent fraud.

The weight of so many and such serious witnesses is increased by the fact that the greater part of them are scientists of the first rank, anxious to consider the alleged manifestations under the most varied aspects, to analyze the reports, to consider the particulars, the circumstances, the causes and effects. Men of well-balanced minds and penetrating intellect, they have set themselves to meditate long and thoroughly the object of their study, to pass a measured judgment, and to weigh their

Haumond, evangelical minister; Simmons, magistrate; John Edmond, magistrate; Aksakoff, Councillor of State of the Czar; Eula, at one time minister of justice and of worship in Italy; Senior, professor of political economy at Oxford; Count Constantine de Bodisco, chamberlain to the Czar; Count Ad. Poninski; De Giers, Russian minister and Chancellor of the Empire; Lincoln, President of the United States; Major-General Daison; I. B. Roustaig, Advocate at the Supreme Court of Bordeaux; Balfour, Lord of the Treasury in London; Falconer, professor of law; Gladstone, English Prime Minister; Senator Negri; Tourowich, who recently (1905) made a contract with Palladino for nine months' experiment in Paris.

words; they most certainly do not wish to be taken for imbeciles, or to allow themselves to be grossly deceived by the first charlatan who comes along.

The celebrated naturalist Alexander Humboldt, invited to pronounce, in presence of King Frederick William IV., on certain spiritistic phenomena, pronounced the following memorable words: "The phenomena cannot be denied; it now remains for science to explain them."

And Mott, President of the Literary and Philosophical Academy of Liverpool, on January 15, 1873, publicly declared before his colleagues, "Either there exists in Nature a force unknown to science, or there is some means of deception equally unknown."

Many doctors, before passing judgment on the phenomena in question, have investigated them thoroughly by constant and repeated observations and examinations, varied according to the most scrupulous rules of the most exact positive modern science.

We may give the place of honor to the committee elected in 1869 by the Dialectical Society of London, among whom figured Alfred Russel Wal-

lace, Augustus de Morgan, C. F. Warley, Hill, Chambers, Howitt, and Edmunds. This committee subjected the phenomena of spiritism to the most scrupulous examinations, and concluded by admitting their real existence.

The experiences of this illustrious committee were, in 1871, re-examined accurately and scrupulously by another well-known Englishman, William Crookes, physicist, who did not fear opposition in any part of the globe; who, at the age of twenty, had already thrown great light on polarized light; who later published important works on the spectra of heavenly bodies; who invented the radiometer and the micro-spectroscope; who wrote valuable books on chemistry; who is author of a treatise on chemical analysis, since become classical; who has made important researches in astronomy; who has largely contributed to the progress of photographing the stars and planets; who did work in lunar photography, which was considered worthy of a prize by the Royal Society of London; who was invited by the English Government to study the solar eclipse at Oran with other scientists; who was versed in medicine, public hygiene, and the natural

sciences, as is proved by his valuable works on the bovine pest; who discovered a process of metallic amalgamation by means of sodium, which is largely used nowadays in Australia, California, and South America for the separation of gold; who discovered a new metal—thallium; who, finally, made known the radiation of matter, and paved the way for the discovery of the Roentgen rays, so useful in the photography of things so-called invisible.

This very intellectual and vastly learned man, who passed his life in investigating Nature's closest secrets, was anxious to examine spiritistic phenomena, and to subject them to the severest tests of experimental science. In his researches he was assisted by two other able physicists—William Huggins and Edward W. Cox.

By means of precise apparatus and automatic registers he scrupulously examined the most insignificant particulars of the phenomena which occurred under his own eyes. He made repeated experiments in full daylight, in rooms chosen by himself, and well lit up either by the sun or by electric light or phosphorus. He himself assisted at the toilet of his mediums, to be sure that nothing

was hidden under their clothes. Some pieces of apparatus were surrounded by metallic cages in order to make sure that they were beyond the reach of the medium's activity. The experimental tables were procured, examined, and placed by him.

And after studying spiritistic phenomena with so many precautions and with the greatest scientific scepticism, he had honestly to repeat what Alfred Russel Wallace had already said before him: "I have obtained the certain proof of spiritistic phenomena."

It is hardly to be supposed that the cerebral functions of William Crookes, and of those illustrious persons who formed the committee of the Dialectical Society, underwent some change at this time. For during their investigations, the different scientists already mentioned were engaged in other scientific researches afterwards given to the public. And besides, each of them gave later on undoubted proof of his sanity. As to Crookes in particular, we may mention that his works on the radiant qualities of matter date from 1878, and that the last of his demonstrations on this subject were made in 1879 before the Congress of the British

Association, and in 1880 at the School of Medicine and at the Observatory in Paris, in presence of very many *savants*, and among them the chemist Wurtz and Admiral Monchez. His studies on spiritism, as we have already seen, date from 1871.

Finally, there are not wanting those who, from being contemptuous of spiritism, after repeated observations and experiments have become witnesses at least, if not convinced adherents, to that spiritism to which they brought the largest possible amount of doubt and diffidence,* among whom should be especially mentioned Cæsar Lombroso.

In face of such numerous witnesses, so distinguished, so competent, so diligent, and so cautious, it seems to us that it would be unreasonable to retain the least doubt as to the reality of the phenomena which form the basis of spiritism.

We should like to conclude this chapter with the very words with which Crookes closed the relation of his observations and experiments:

"People who are ever greedy for the supernatural will ask us, 'Do you believe, or do you not believe?'

* *Inuovi orrizonti della psichiatria* in the *Rivista d'Italia*, February, 1904. *Luce combra.* Milan, September 1, 1905.

We reply, 'We are chemists, we are physicists; our business does not consist in believing or not believing, but rather in ascertaining in a positive manner whether a given phenomenon is or is not imaginary. This done, the rest does not belong to our sphere."

"According to Sir W. Thomson, 'science is bound by the everlasting law of honor to face fearlessly every problem which can fairly be presented to it.' It will not do merely to deny its existence, or try to sneer it down. Remember, I hazard no hypothesis or theory whatever; I merely vouch for certain facts, my only object being—the *truth*. Doubt, but do not deny; point out by the severest criticism what are considered fallacies in my experimental tests, and suggest more conclusive trials; but do not let us hastily call our senses lying witnesses merely because they testify against preconceptions. I say to my critics, Try the experiments; investigate with care and patience as I have done. If, having examined, you discover imposture or delusion, proclaim it and say how it was done. But if you find it to be a fact, avow it fearlessly, as 'by the everlasting law of honor' you are bound to do." *

* *Quarterly Journal of Science*, vol. i. (new series), 473. 1871.

We agree entirely with these very wise words. And if some like to think us simpletons, we prefer to be simpletons with Wynne, Huggins, Russel Wallace, Cox, Tyndall, Humphry Davy, Richardson, Humboldt, and Crookes, not to mention many other very eminent scientists, than to be numbered with those crafty and knowing people who presume to judge without previous investigation.

It is needless to say that no weight and no importance should be attributed to those pseudo-scientists who one day combat spiritism and the next day prove it. Take, for example, Louis Figuier, who, in the *Histoire du Merveilleux*, attacks spiritism bitterly, and then in *Le lendemain de la mort, ou la vie future selon la science* admits its possibility, adducing eloquent proofs in its favor, and only declaring as unworthy the manner in which the spirits manifest themselves, that is by raps, table-turning, and similar expedients.

18. We have sometimes been asked if we have had personal experience of the truth and reality of the marvellous phenomena which we have described. Loving truth, we have been obliged to reply in the negative; opportunity and facilities have been

wanting for us to examine seriously the phenomena of spiritism with the necessary care, the indispensable precautions, the required apparatus, and the help that would be needed.

But the want of personal experience does not in the least affect the reality and truth of the facts recorded, any more than the want of direct personal observation prevents our believing the existence of the Straits of Magellan, the Isthmus of Panama, or of the Banks of Newfoundland, or in the least lessens the truth of the medical descriptions of certain tropical maladies that we have never had occasion to study objectively.

Be that as it may, for those who wish deliberately and at all costs to reject the truth, the fact whether we have personally or not observed the phenomena in question is, and ought to be, immaterial, or in any case their reality would not be admitted.

Indeed, since we declare that we have never personally experienced these phenomena, those who are bound to deny their reality will doubtless at once proclaim that they do not exist, and will not fail to laugh at the incomprehensible credulity with which we accept the narrations of others,

although most worthy of belief and beyond cavil in point of competency. But if we were to declare that we had personally experienced, studied, and witnessed these very phenomena, the same sceptics would not fail to mock us, saying that we also, like many other enlightened people, are deluded or have been grossly deceived. Against the preconceptions and the obstinacy of those sceptics what value would our testimony or our assurance have? They alone, these wiseacres, confronted by certain inexplicable phenomena, would have been able to find out the fraud; all others may be easily gulled, but they alone are wise beyond deception.

CHAPTER IV

ANALOGY AND DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HYPNOTIC AND SPIRITISTIC PHENOMENA

1. Confusion between hypnotic and spiritistic phenomena —2. Analogy between the two—3. Characteristic details of hypnotic and spiritistic phenomena—4. Possible association between hypnotism and spiritism; spiritistic hypnotism or hypnotic spiritism.

1. Many writers, even very clever ones, confuse hypnotism and spiritism in a manner which is not only deplorable in itself, but damaging to science. According to them, hypnotism is the same thing as spiritism, or, at least by their nature and origin, both are on the same level. Two considerations incline them to this confusion: the first is that hypnotic subjects, as well as spiritistic mediums, almost always belong to the neurotic class; the second is that from hypnotic to spiritistic phenomena the distance is not great, and very frequently they are found side by side, alternately or even together.

Whilst admitting the justice of these considerations, we cannot admit the conclusions derived from them. If neurotic subjects can, with equal facility, be submitted to hypnotic influences or become spiritistic mediums, it only signifies that they are more susceptible than other people to exterior influences. If the phenomena due to hypnotism are associated and mixed up with those due to spiritism, the only significance to be found therein is that the former are used as a cover for the latter. In the order of creation we see many other phenomena in the same reciprocal conditions as those in which hypnotism and spiritism are found, and no one has ever thought to confound one with another. During a summer storm both thunderbolts and hail are generated, but it does not follow that thunderbolts and hail are the same thing. Wind, thunder, and rain proceed simultaneously or alternately under the same conditions. But the wind is not thunder, and neither wind nor thunder is rain. Each of these three things has different causes, a different physical origin, and each can exist independently of the other.

2. According to my opinion, hypnotism and

spiritism have only one analogy, and that is the marvellous nature of the phenomena which belong to them both. And, in truth, if it is marvellous to see furniture moving about and changing places, it is not less marvellous to see a person in the full vigor of life apparently dead, as in lethargy, or in the statuesque immobility of catalepsy.

Moreover, it must be granted that this analogy is only superficial, for while the marvellous nature of hypnotic phenomena is based chiefly on the fact that they occur but rarely, the spiritistic phenomena are furthermore marvellous on account of their mysterious origin and their wonderful manifestations. Besides, whilst hypnotic phenomena may be subjected to natural laws, as when subjects are spontaneously afflicted with lethargy, catalepsy, and somnambulism, spiritistic phenomena, on the other hand, entirely transcend those same laws.

3. In spite of the analogy between hypnotism and spiritism because of their marvellous phenomena, to my mind there is a very great difference between them. And to be convinced of this fact, it should be sufficient to observe that, whilst hypnotic phenomena exclusively affect the individual in the hypnotic

state, the spiritistic phenomena, on the contrary, affect not only the medium, but all who are present with him. And, in truth, in hypnotism the subject alone presents the required conditions which make him an object of wonder, and what he does and says does not transcend the natural powers nor go outside the sphere of his individual *rapports*. It is not thus in spiritism, where the astounding phenomena affect not only the medium, but also those who are present, or maybe those at a distance.

Nor is that all. Whereas in hypnotism the unusual phenomena are provoked by an influence which is exercised by others on the subject experimented upon, in spiritism, on the other hand, it is the medium who causes from within himself, so to speak, the marvels which we have already seen. Thus in one case the hypnotized person is the patient acted upon, in the other the medium is a truly efficient factor.

But there is yet another point to be noted. Hypnotic phenomena refer only to living persons, whilst spiritistic phenomena may relate also to dead beings or mere material objects. No one has ever succeeded or even attempted by hypnotism to influence seats, tables, or chairs objectively. In spiritism,

however, these different objects often have a very important and active part to play.

Finally, whereas hypnotism presents only a special state of some living beings, by which some of their faculties are rendered almost *nil*, and others increase in activity, spiritism, on the contrary, reveals new forces that do not usually act in nature, and which, when in action, tend to subvert and upset all natural laws, the most constant, the most universal, and, I might almost say, the most fundamental.

There is an abyss between hypnotism and spiritism; one is quite distinct from the other, and it is a gross and very dangerous mistake to confound one with the other. We do not believe that such an error is voluntarily and deliberately committed in order to throw discredit on hypnotism, one of the most beautiful and most interesting conquests of modern science. We believe, rather, that it is the outcome of incomplete and inadequate knowledge on a much-discussed subject.

4. By the distinction drawn above, we do not mean in the least to deny that sometimes hypnotism and spiritism go hand-in-hand. Authentic examples of such an alliance are very numerous. And Charcot

gives a case in point in one of his lessons.* But we must not forget what we have already said—that if hypnotism is sometimes allied and associated with spiritism, that only happens because the marvels of one open up the way for the other, and obtain its more favorable reception. Such a fact does not in the least justify the opinion that hypnotism and spiritism are one and the same thing. To mix or unite two different things does not make them identical. Every day we are accustomed to mix water with wine, but we do not think that water is wine, or wine water. And as, from the union of water with wine, at the most we are authorized to say that we make a watered wine or a wined water, so from the observation that hypnotism is sometimes united with spiritism we may conclude the existence of a hybrid form of *spiritistic hypnotism*, or of *hypnotic spiritism*, to which we may give the shorter name of *hypno-spiritism*, in which the distinct phenomena of hypnotism and of spiritism unite together, not in virtue of their identical nature, but solely in virtue of an accidental and temporary alliance.

* Charcot, *Leçons sur les maladies du système nerveux*, complete works, vol. iii. p. 229 *sqq.* Paris: Delahaye and Lécrosnier. 1887.

CHAPTER V

ON THE NATURE OF HYPNOTISM AND ITS MANIFESTATIONS

1. Errors about hypnotism and its manifestations; refutation—2. Hypnotism is a morbid state of the nerve centres; demonstration; objections and answers—3. Probable working of the relations between hypnotizer and hypnotized—4. Probable working of the phenomena of suggestion—5. Duplication and substitution of personality—6. Organic disturbances and transposition of senses—7. Knowledge of unknown languages, clairvoyance, and hearing from a distance—8. Hypnotism is a morbid state, sometimes permanent and sometimes transitory, sometimes manifest, sometimes latent—9. Hypnotism is probably one of the many symptomatic manifestations, either spontaneous or induced, of hysteria—10. Hypnotic or hypnotizable subjects.

1. In hypnotism and its manifestations some see only the effects of trickery and fraud, whilst others find therein the results of extraordinary occult forces.

The first have been silenced by Charcot, who has proved that in the different hypnotic states

objective physical phenomena occur which could not possibly be simulated either by the most subtle trickery or the strongest will-power. And truly the exaggeration of the so-called tendon reflexes, permanent muscular contraction, transitory neuro-muscular excitability, slow and equal respiration, the stable uniformity of the muscular tonicity, are phenomena which defy the skill and power of the most cunning trickster. In the different hypnotic states one or other of these phenomena is never wanting, and when one or other of them exists there can be no doubt as to the reality of the hypnotic state.

Touching the doctrines of Charcot, some one has observed that the phenomena mentioned are not characteristic of the hypnotic state, because in certain neurotic subjects they are found outside that state. But Charcot never intended to say that these physical phenomena *only* take place in hypnotism, but he did intend to say when they occurred in hypnotism they proved the reality of the hypnotic state, and excluded the possibility of simulation. In this sense he has said that these phenomena are characteristic of hypnotism. In the same way

it is commonly said that fever is characteristic of inflammation of the lungs, of typhoid, and of scarlatina, although fever occurs not only in these illnesses, which may indeed in exceptional cases be without fever.

Those who attribute hypnotism to the intervention of extraordinary occult forces probably have not sufficient knowledge of the subject, or perhaps take for the foundation of their opinion the phenomena of hypno-spiritism. It is certain that in order to strengthen their argument they quote the originality and inexplicable strangeness of hypnotic phenomena.

In reply we may state that in hypnotic phenomena there is nothing original or strange which may not take place in the ordinary conditions of life; that the most marvellous hypnotic phenomena have a satisfactory explanation in the ordinary laws of physiology and pathology, and that they never contradict the ordinary laws of nature.

2. For ourselves we see in hypnotism nothing but a particular morbid state of the nerve centres; a morbid state which is singular, if you will, but always within the limits of the explicable.

And in support of our contention we will only observe that the three morbid conditions peculiar to hypnotism are encountered pretty frequently alone in the course of nature. In every hospital and every asylum one often sees patients in a state of lethargy or catalepsy. As for somnambules, they are to be found not only in hospitals and asylums, but also in communities, colleges, and families.

But whether in hospitals, communities, or families, no doctor or layman of any culture has ever pretended to see in lethargy, catalepsy, or somnambulism anything but a morbid condition, however marvellous he may deem it.

If, then, lethargy, catalepsy, and somnambulism are three natural morbid states when they exist alone, it seems to me unreasonable not to judge them in the same manner when they are united together, or occur either successively or alternately to constitute the so-called hypnotic state.

As in nature lethargy, catalepsy, and somnambulism may exist separately, so also in nature these three phenomena may be united in brief successive periods of time, and be reciprocally substituted one for the other in one individual person. A typical

case of this kind was published not so many years ago by Professor Francesco Vizioli, of Naples.* We have, then, so-called *spontaneous hypnotism*, which for the most part is merely transient, and does not give place to any of the more surprising manifestations of the hypnotic state. And cases of this kind are always regarded as cases of illness. But if some cases of hypnotism are illnesses, why should other cases which occur with the same symptomatic manifestations be judged differently?

Some, judging natural hypnotism only as a simple morbid fact, might say that induced hypnotism should be differently judged, because it depends on the will of another.

It is easy to reply to this difficulty. There are many other morbid conditions which can be equally well induced without their ceasing to be illnesses or manifestations of illnesses. If the delirium of madness, of brain affections, of high fever, is morbid, the delirium caused by too much alcohol, and by the use of certain intoxicating substances, as opium, *Cannabis Indica*, belladonna, chloroform, ether, and gas, is also morbid. Epilepsy, which may be arti-

* *Giornale di nevrologia*, Nos. 5 and 6. Naples, 1885.

ficially induced, is a morbid phenomenon, as is that which is spontaneous. The fact, then, that hypnotism may be artificially induced is not sufficient reason to alter the nature of its morbid manifestation, nor sufficient authority to say that in some cases its nature is different.

On the other hand, it is necessary to add that it is not exact to say that induced hypnotism is a purely artificial malady, provoked at the will and pleasure of others. For it has been fully shown nowadays that those who are perfectly healthy are not hypnotizable, and that all hypnotizable individuals are more or less predisposed to hypnotism, either by hereditary or by congenital or acquired maladies, or by particular and temporary conditions of health.

It is needless to urge to the contrary that sometimes healthy and robust people, such as peasants, have been hypnotized. Physical robustness is not always accompanied by a normal healthy condition of the cerebral functions. In the same way, one sees thin people with lion hearts, and gigantic people as timid as a hare; so does one see in delicate people brains which refuse to be hypnotized,

and in the athletic body of a soldier or a vigorous and rugged colonist brains very easily hypnotized.

Add to all this what the Jesuit Father Kircher proved in his time, that an hypnotic state may be induced by purely natural means in animals, and especially in fowls. Nowadays the frog has been successfully hypnotized without any mysterious or wonderful practices.* And what can be naturally effected in animals may with reason be naturally brought about in man.

We admit that it is difficult to explain how by such very simple means it is possible to induce in a fit subject a morbid state so grave and profound as hypnotism. But it is well to consider that of the singular phenomena in question a plausible explanation is to hand. It consists in the exhaustion of cerebral activity by means of light and persistent sensory stimuli, or in the excessive excitability of certain cerebral centres, morbidly predisposed, and put into play by means of the protracted stimula-

* Charcot, *Œuvres complètes*, vol. ix. p. 262. Paris, 1890. *Riforma medica*, p. 149, July 15, 1895. *Progrès Médical*, p. 22, July 13, 1895; Laurent and Bernheim, *Pathologie Médicale*, vol. ii. p. 467. Paris, 1895.

tion of certain sensory centres to the detriment of the activity of the other centres of the brain. One or other of the two hypotheses sufficiently explains the origin of hypnotic sleep. But even if this were not the case the morbid nature of hypnotism would not be altered. There exist other nervous phenomena of which we do not understand the mechanism, but which are, nevertheless, still regarded as ordinary nervous actions. Every one knows that yawning is an infectious and nervous action, and, as far as I know, no one can tell how yawning is communicated from one person to another. And with regard to this we may as well point out that in the origin, however hypothetic, of induced hypnotism, as in the fact of the infectiousness of a yawn, there is nothing that in the least contradicts any physical or biological laws of nature, or that supposes even their momentary suspension. And it must be noticed that we are speaking of physical or biological laws, and not of any organic functional activity.

3. The exclusive relations of the hypnotized subject with his hypnotizer during hypnosis have nothing strange in them if it be remembered what we have

already pointed out, namely, that under hypnotic conditions the imagination of the subject is absolutely absorbed in the contemplation of the only person who occupied it when the morbid sleep overcame him. That the imagination absorbed in the contemplation of any object is easily distracted from the rest of its surroundings is a thing that we all experience ourselves every day, when occupied with some serious interest, or during a walk, or in a theatre; we end by gradually losing sight of everything else, and by not noticing anything that is going on around us. St. Thomas Aquinas relates how, abandoning himself to the contemplation of God, he would become abstracted from the exterior world in such a manner that on one occasion he did not feel the pain of a surgical operation performed upon his foot. The story is told of Dante that, absorbed in the perusal of a book which he had discovered after a vain search for many years, he did not notice the noise of a merry wedding party which passed before the shop in which he was reading. The attention of the imagination being concentrated on a particular train of ideas has nothing left to give to other matters.

Well did Dante sing *—

> "O immaginativa, che ne rube
> Talvolta si di fuor, ch'uom non s'accorge,
> Benchè d'intorno suonin mille tube."

This much premised, there is nothing strange in the fact that the hypnotized subject, entirely absorbed in the operations of the hypnotizer, sees only his person and hears only his voice. Thus his imagination isolates him from the rest of the world in such a manner that a little while after the beginning of the experiment the whole universe is contained in the hypnotizer—that is, as far as the hypnotized subject is concerned. The others who are present, or who put in an appearance afterwards, show themselves and speak in vain. The somnambule hears nothing and sees nothing of them.

By his words and actions the hypnotizer gives the sensory impressions which excite in the imagination of the subject particular pictures and a given order of ideas. The imagination, in its turn, represents these pictures and ideas with such lifelike force to the intellect that it accepts them as real objects, and behind this fictitious appreciation the

* *Divine Comedy*, "*Purgatory*," c. xvii.

debilitated will is led to act in a corresponding manner.

By such successive operations the hypnotized subject becomes a machine in the hands of the experimenters, so far as to evoke again, by an unconscious association of ideas, after a certain time and in a state of wakefulness, a particular phantasm, a lively sentiment, an overmastering passion, a fictitious need, created and sustained in him during hypnotic sleep by the caprice of a stranger. Thus he will be led almost inevitably to execute in full wakefulness the strangest commands, which he does not know he has been ordered to do, or that he thinks are the inexplicable outcome of his own mental activity.

The knowledge of the relation of these diverse phenomena ought, it seems to me, to help to do away with any sort or shadow of mystery about the famous *rapport* between the hypnotizer and his subject which was thought so much about among the adepts of animal magnetism. In that relation of phenomena they believed to find a proof of their theory of a magnetic fluid which emanated from the experimenter, uniting him intimately with the subject on whom the fluid itself acted. But evidently

the theory was wanting in solid foundations, arising as it did from absolutely gratuitous suppositions.

4. Suggestion, which is one of the most wonderful phenomena of hypnotism, is found in embryo also in the more normal conditions of life. An idea, a thought which strikes us forcibly when in perfect health, may become so fixed in our brain that for some days it gives us no peace and is constantly present to the intellect in season and out of season, when at play and when at work. We are accustomed to use the method of suggestion when by association of ideas we wish to remember something. Thinking of a friend, we determine to ask him for some explanation the first time we see him. Weeks go by, the friend is not met, and no more is thought about the explanation. But one day, when least expected, we suddenly meet our friend, and the thought of the suggested explanation all at once rises up in our minds. If in hypnotic suggestion the mind of the patient sees objectively what is proposed to him, it is only because of the force with which the phantasms of the imagination are presented to the intellect—a phenomenon which in mental pathology finds its counterpart in a belief

in the real existence of certain objects of illusion or hallucination. But still more definite suggestions are made, under ordinary conditions, when a serious thought dominates us. In the evening, at bedtime, we are perhaps preoccupied with the thought that we must rise at a certain hour. And it very often happens that at the specified hour, quite contrary to our habits, we find ourselves awake without knowing how or why. The difference between suggestions in ordinary life and in hypnotism is merely a question of proportion, and this proportion, in its turn, depends on the force with which the imagination, working during the hypnotic sleep in isolated regions, is impressed by particular phantasms which persist in the waking state and surpass for a certain time all the others.

5. As to the double personality which sometimes takes place in hypnotism, this is a phenomenon which is also found to a greater or less extent in many forms of madness. It seems to be due to the loosening of the bonds between the different spheres of cerebral covering, from which results a dissociation of the different centres of the imagination. Moreover, a rudimentary form of this double conscious-

ness takes place, under healthy conditions, during sleep. Who has not dreamed that he was dead, and has even assisted at his own funeral? Or has dreamed that he was some important person, who for some act praised or reproached his own self, thus behaving as two entirely distinct individuals?

What is said of double consciousness may be also said with still more reason of the substitution of the subject's personality for that of different people,—as often happens in dreams too,—which makes him believe that he is really a lady, an old man, a child, or even an animal.

6. Then the production of certain organic disturbances, which may be brought about by suggestion, constitutes a somewhat strange phenomenon, but has nothing incomprehensible about it when we remember the intimate relationship which exists between the physical and the moral in the living man, or if we remember how easily, after some emotion, the various secretions of our body are accelerated (perspiration, saliva, urine, etc.), and how the intestinal functions, secretions, and evacuations are similarly influenced.

Even the strange phenomenon of the so-called

transposition of senses, which seems almost incredible, may be plausibly explained by natural physical causes, viz., by the morbid functional exaggeration and abnormal sensitiveness acquired during the hypnotic state by certain nerve fibres together with the corresponding brain centres, which are thereby made capable of responding to the most delicate impressions of light-rays, of odorous effluvia to which, under normal conditions, they are absolutely insensible. And whilst this is true on the one side, the opposite fact is true on the other side; for terminations and nerve fibres and certain brain centres which under normal conditions are of a nature destined to receive and perceive certain sensory impressions, become absolutely insensible to all the physical impressions proper to them.

7. It remains to speak of the various languages that it is said people have spoken when in an hypnotic condition. If the facts related are true, we must declare that they are absolutely outside the range of simple hypnotism. One authenticated case has been very satisfactorily explained. An almost illiterate girl was artificially hypnotized, and suddenly began to recite a long Latin oration, of which

language she did not know a word. The thing was marvellous and incomprehensible to all. But after some months it was found out that some years before an uncle of the girl had one day recited that same extract near the bedroom of the girl, who was then ill. During the hypnotic state her memory had recalled with great force and precision to her imagination what she had only heard once several years before. And being ignorant of her letters even, she had not understood a word of the Latin extract when she heard it, neither had she understood it when she recited it during hypnosis.

In the history of mental pathology similar instances are not wanting of temporary exaltation of the faculty of memory. A case is given by Michea which is frequently referred to by writers on psychology. A butcher boy, during an attack of madness, recited whole pages of Racine's *Phèdre*. When convalescent he declared that he had only once heard the tragedy, and, cured of his mania, he could never remember a single verse of it, no matter how much he tried.

As we have already remarked, none of the various forms of *clairvoyance* has ever shown itself in a

hypnotic subject. But if one day or other such a thing did occur, a satisfactory explanation could be found in the physical conditions morbidly aroused, similar to those by which, nowadays, it is possible to see through opaque objects by means of Röntgen rays, or the transmission of alphabetic signs by means of Marconi's wireless telegraphy.

The same reasoning applies to the eventual possibility of hypnotics hearing at great distances.

In virtue of the preceding considerations, we believe ourselves fully authorized to conclude that in hypnotism, and in its manifestations, there is nothing to be found but the expression of a morbid cerebro-spinal state in which there is nothing inconsistent with other phenomena known to science, or that may be considered contrary or superior to the known laws of biology.

8. The special morbid condition wherein hypnotism is constituted may be permanent or transitory. In either case it is not always manifest, and is very often absolutely latent. In the first case, hypnotism always constitutes a true and real infirmity, when it is often called, and not without reason, hypnotic disease, or hypnosis. In the second, although it

cannot accurately be called an illness, yet at least it tends strongly to predispose to certain disturbances in the nerve centres.

Some, having observed that thirty per cent. of normal persons can present hypnotic phenomena, have concluded therefrom that hypnotism may occur in a variable manner in perfectly healthy people.*

We cannot agree with this conclusion, because it is a known fact that healthy people do not present any hypnotic phenomena, except when prey to at least some transitory disturbance of cerebral nutrition or circulation, or when they are under the influence of some morbid condition of the nervous system. On the other hand, let us observe that those who so easily affirm the healthiness of the subjects examined by them have forgotten that many nervous alterations may co-exist with the most satisfactory appearance of health, the clinical phenomena which characterize them being so slight as likely to be

* Liébault, *Du sommeil et des états analogues.* Paris, Nancy, 1866. *Étude sur la zoomagnétisme.* Paris, Nancy, 1833. Bottey, *Hypnotisme chez les sujets sains.* Paris, 1884. Brémand, *Des differ. phases de l'Hypnotisme, Soc. de biologie,* April, 1884. Skepto, *L'Hypnotisme et les Religions.* Paris, Bordeaux, 1888.

unnoticed by the patient himself. Epilepsy may serve as an example. Very often epilepsy shows itself only by some slight transitory giddiness, a passing sense of heaviness, and only exceptionally and under special conditions does it manifest itself in a serious form under such circumstances, and perhaps then only once in a lifetime.

For us, then, hypnotism cannot co-exist with a good state of health. And those individuals who, being healthy, present hypnotic phenomena are not healthy except in appearance; or, at least, before the hypnotic attack they fall a prey to a disturbance in the nutrition and circulation of the nerve centres, whether this occurs naturally or is provoked artificially.

The most experienced observers entirely agree with this view of the case.* And quite recently Hirsch,† who has examined a great number of people with hypnotic tendencies, asserts that he has never found a single one amongst them whom

* Janat Paul, *De la suggestion dans l'hypnotisme* in the *Revue politique et littéraire*, 1884.

† W. Hirsch, *Die menschl. Verantwortlichkeit und die moderne Suggestionslehre.* Berlin, 1886. *Riforma Medica*, No. 2, 1896.

he could consider healthy. According to him, the opinion that a truly normal person can present hypnotic manifestations is absolutely without any scientific or empirical foundation.

9. Statistics tell us that among subjects capable of presenting hypnotic phenomena hysterical persons hold the first rank. Clinical observation adds three other points not less important: that hysterical people alone experience hypnotism without exterior stimuli; that those who are subjected to repeated attacks of hypnotism very soon become hysterical; that the same causes which excite hypnotism determine hysteria; and among these causes must be mentioned heredity, a neurotic constitution, wrong methods of education, violent emotions, not omitting those induced by spiritistic practices, and so on.

From these facts we are led to conclude that hypnotism is almost certainly but one of the many clinical manifestations of hysteria. This conclusion is in complete accordance with the opinion of the first observers of hypnotic phenomena, notably Puységur, Faria, Noizet; also Braid and Azam, and more recently Charcot, Pitres, Richer, and the

majority of the most competent modern writers on hypnology.

We have already said elsewhere that hypnotism may be spontaneous or induced. In those who suffer from natural hypnotism it is easy to induce artificial hypnotism, because every little extrinsic cause is sufficient in these subjects to bring into play the automatic morbid activity of those brain centres on which hypnotic phenomena depend. And, conversely, induced hypnotism prepares the way for spontaneous hypnotism, or perhaps gives the last impulse to a morbid propensity just on the point of developing into a natural illness; or perhaps the repetition of certain morbid phenomena in a not too well balanced organism gives to the latter, so to speak, a wrong direction, a morbid tendency which otherwise would not have been acquired.

It is clear that there is no precise dividing line between spontaneous and artificial hypnotism, and that there may be a gradual and imperceptible transition from one to the other, for one can be mixed with or can alternate with the other. And it is, moreover, manifest that the nature of the two

morbid forms is identical, a fact further proved by the similarity of their clinical manifestations.

10. Subjects in whom spontaneous hypnotism is present are called *hypnotic subjects*. Those in whom induced hypnotism may be present are called *sensible* or *hypnotizable subjects*. But as most of the times hypnotic subjects are also hypnotizable, and the latter nearly always end by having attacks of natural hypnotism, one cannot well adhere to this distinction, and generally the two terms are used promiscuously. Neither science nor practice is damaged thereby.

Hypnotism manifests itself clinically by distinctive phenomena, already noticed by us, and which appear in accesses of variable frequency and durability, and separated by somewhat irregular intervals of quiet.

If the abnormal state of the nerves of the subject is most pronounced when the clinical phenomena of hypnotism are in evidence, a not very different abnormal state is manifested in the intermediate periods of quiet. To be convinced, then, that the subject is not in an ordinary physiological condition, it will be sufficient to remember that his organ-

ism then reacts in a singular and unusual manner to physical and psychical stimuli, both exterior and interior; and that the most insignificant cause is enough to determine afresh the appearance of the characteristics of his neurotic condition. Thus, as the nerve centres of an epileptic remain in a morbid condition even when not under attack, particularly when some vestige of the previous attack or attacks remain, so also must the nervous system of a person who presents clinical phenomena of hypnotism be ill even when the crisis is past, especially when the attacks have been frequent and have left some residuum behind.

CHAPTER VI

ON THE NATURE OF SPIRITISM AND ITS RELATIVE MANIFESTATIONS

1. Mental state of spiritistic mediums; historical evolution of spiritism; facility with which spirits adapt themselves to various tastes—2. Spiritistic phenomena, hallucinations, illusions; confession of Lombroso—3. Spiritism and fraud—4. Fraud in the practices of the teachers of spiritism—5. Fraud of the medium Harry Bastian discovered by the archdukes of Austria—6. Unconscious fraud; rhythmic contraction of certain muscles; Austin Flint, Maurizio Schiff, Luigi Concato—7. Ventriloquism—8. Hypnotism with regard to table-turning—9. Circumspection necessary in inquiring into the nature and causes of spiritistic phenomena—10. The fraudulent practices of some mediums does not prove that all spiritism is fraudulent; observations of William Crookes do not appear to have been tainted with deceit—11. Unacceptable explanations of the fraud attributed to the medium Eusapia Paladino—12. Opinion of two conjurers on certain spiritistic phenomena and the possibility of fraud—13. None of the many converts from spiritism has been able to explain the secret of these frauds—14. Muscular dexterity is insufficient for the explanation of noises—15. Ventrilo-

quism does not always account for the voices—16. Hypnotism insufficient to explain the moving of furniture or the writings—17. Reality of spiritism and its manifestations; these are, perhaps, rarer than supposed —18. Science must recognize as preternatural certain phenomena attributed to spiritism; we are impressed by the supernatural, notwithstanding our ignorance with regard to other possible forces as yet unknown—19. Causes of genuine spiritistic phenomena; some metaphysics and some ideas of William Crookes—20. Spiritism and the old magicians.

1. As to spiritism, the mind of the student must have been struck by certain facts which we will now rapidly survey.

Firstly, it has been proved that spiritism has come to us in these days from countries where the mental instability, eccentricity, and love of the marvellous are common things. America, England, and France undoubtedly take the first rank among these countries. The feverishly active lives which are led in these lands perhaps give the explanation of this fact.

In addition to that, mediums, whether intermediary or not, of spiritistic phenomena are all more or less unbalanced and neurotic. They are very like the diviners, the oracles, the sibyls of antiquity; and

therefore the English, using a felicitous term, call their state during their functions by the name of *trance*, which means to say a journey to another state of being, almost signifying that in this condition they are unconscious, possessed, and also ill and irresponsible.

Nor is this all. The history of spiritism presents us with progressive phases of evolution, which agree little with the sincerity and simplicity which ought to accompany the manifestations of superior beings. The spirits began to manifest by noises, then by the production of mechanical and biological phenomena, followed in their turn by written or spoken correspondence, first with the help of the mediums, then directly either with or without suitable means, and finally by complete apparitions and materializations. Crookes first found that these apparitions and materializations were absolutely refractory to development on a photographic plate, but later Crookes himself and innumerable others succeeded excellently in fixing and reproducing them by photography. In all that there is something strange. It seems almost as if the spirits had been obliged to learn how to manifest themselves

and to perfect themselves in the use of the means familiar in the world beyond their ken. It may have been that the spirits wished to be prudent, and only to reveal themselves little by little to keep alive men's curiosity, not to frighten timid minds unduly, and not to overpower the majority by the extraordinary quantity of marvels of which they are capable.

Another not less surprising fact is the facility with which the spirits adapt themselves to the tastes of their clients. It might be said that, like the ancient Pythoness who suited her oracles to please King Philip, so to-day the spirits are partial to the professed opinions of those who consult them; pious with the pious, affectionate with the affectionate, political with politicians, business-like with merchants, learned with the lovers of learning, thoughtless with the gay, vulgar and gross with the vulgar. For this reason in England the spirits are sceptical, discursive, and cautious; in Germany, mystical, speculative, and transcendental; and in France, licentious, generous, thoughtless, and frivolous. In the United States of America, they are positive, dogmatic, and bold, and proclaim metempsychosis;

whilst elsewhere, especially in Italy, they declare themselves to be pantheists, atheists, materialists. Among the Mormons and in Utah, they approve and praise polygamy; and then where abortion is commonly practised they declare it to be both lawful and a duty. In Russia they praise the orthodox religion, and at the same time encourage the Nihilist propaganda. In Spain, on the other hand, they demand that all spiritistic societies shall be incorporated with the Freemasons, declaring that spiritism has common cause with the latter with regard to principles and the chief foundations of doctrine. If there is one thing on which the spirits agree, it is in abusing the Roman Catholic religion, of which they can only speak evil.

With these facts before us, the doubt naturally arises whether spiritism is not attributable to hallucinations or illusions, or even to fraud. The learned have believed it possible to explain spiritism and its singular manifestations by one or the other of these two suppositions.

2. But can we admit that all spiritism can be reduced to a question of hallucination or illusion? No, certainly not. When writers from every age

from the remotest antiquity to our own days, and when historians of every nationality, be they barbarous or civil, have borne witness to the possibility of sensible intercourse between the living and superior immaterial beings, it is absurd to admit that everything is the product of mental disease. It is not credible that on so important a matter the most eminent men of every age and every place have had illusions or hallucinations of the same kind, and been impressed more or less with the same stamp. And not less absurd is it to admit that for almost half a century an enormous number of people, nearly contemporary with ourselves, in different parts of the globe, of different ages, in different personal conditions, and in different grades of mental culture, should have fallen a prey to a similar kind of hallucination and illusion about the constant repetition of certain phenomena. That among those who practise spiritism the number of neurotic persons largely prevails, simply means that these subjects are inclined more than others to the love of the marvellous, or that the marvellous phenomena observed by minds not prepared and not tempered to certain surprises may have as final effect an upheaval of the

nervous system even in subjects sufficiently healthy. Professor Lombroso, with all his scepticism, after having assisted in Milan at some spiritistic *séances* given by Eusapia Paladino, was constrained to say to some of his friends, "After that proof I shall go away, because I feel I might go mad. I must rest my mind." *

Besides, the removal of furniture, instantaneously taken from one place to another, and even from house to house, is evidenced by people who have arrived on the scene after the experiment, perhaps the day after, and have seen the objects in their new positions. They could not be the victims of illusion or hallucination.

Finally, it cannot be admitted that the registers, by means of which Crookes proved the reality of observed facts, were incorrect, much less the photographic plates on which he endeavored to reproduce certain phenomena, and which at first sometimes were and sometimes were not sensitive to the reflex luminous impressions of the apparitions.

We are willing to admit that illusions and hallu-

* *Osservatore Cattolico* (journal), September 23, 24, 1892.

cinations explain some isolated cases in spiritism, but it is certain that these pathological facts cannot give the key to all of them.

3. Thus, largely eliminating the seductive hypothesis of illusions and hallucinations, we ask ourselves, Is it credible that what cannot be explained in spiritism as the outcome of hallucinations and illusions may be due to fraud?

In an earlier passage, discussing the objective reality of spiritistic phenomena, we have already implicitly proved that such an hypothesis cannot be entertained either by the actual facts or by the account given of them.

Of the same opinion as ourselves in this respect, Professor Carlo Richet repudiates the idea * that persons of distinction occupying a superior scientific and social position, of a morality which seems above suspicion, should have agreed the whole world over to relate lying tales, and to boldly proclaim imposture without any interest or advantage to be derived therefrom. Unless we become sceptical as regards human evidence, we cannot support the theory that there is nothing but fraud and deceit in spiritism.

* *Revue philosophique*, September, 1895.

If, then, there is fraud in spiritism, it can only be in the means employed by certain individuals, particularly by those who for gain or other motives may have interest in causing the marvellous phenomena of a pseudo-spiritism.

It is undeniable that spiritism lends itself more than hypnotism to fraud and deceit, especially when its manifestation takes place among ignorant people, who are easily inclined to accept as true the most extravagant mystifications and the most unlikely absurdities.

And it is also undeniable that it must always be a great temptation even for the most zealous partisans of spiritism to use it as a means of gaining money. Nor is it unlikely that, when the number of mediums began to increase, some among them may have wished to have a supremacy over the others—a supremacy they claimed by reason of precedence and which they considered useful for their business. And to keep the upper hand it may have been necessary to have recourse to the commonest frauds, and it is not improbable that the mediums largely employed these means, that whilst enjoying a greater reputation they might rely on the moral fascination

exercised on the public before whom they revealed their prodigies.

4. To prove that this is really the case, those who deny the reality of spiritistic phenomena have noted that in many places disturbing spiritistic manifestations have been immediately interrupted as soon as public authority looked into the matter, or when some interested person surrounded the place of exhibition by a guard, or when some person suspected of being the probable author of the observed phenomena was removed.

As to the Fox sisters, the voice of the public did not fail to accuse them of trickery at the *end* of their career. Douglas Home, on the decline of his spiritistic apostleship when he married a rich Englishwoman, revealed *some* of his frauds in the evocations of spirits owing to the sagacity of the novelist Eugenio Guinot, of the singer Nadaud, and of General Baraguay d'Hilliers. It is said that the marvellous performances of the brothers Davenport were shown to be *to a great extent* the tricks of conjurers by Robin, a greater juggler than themselves. And of the photographer Buguet, who claimed to be able to photograph the ghosts of the relations of his

clients, it is recorded that he also was proved to be the author of the deepest fraud in a case tried at Paris, June 16, 1875, which condemned him.

But it must not be forgotten that very often the interruption of spiritistic manifestations is obtained by violently altering or destroying the conditions indispensable to their production, and that the accusations of fraud against *some* mediums not only affect but a *few* special circumstances, but have been made and admitted without any serious scientific control. And instead of seizing the most favorable moment for thoroughly studying certain singular phenomena, perhaps it has been thought more convenient and more opportune to hush matters over, preventing public opinion from any longer troubling about certain events, either by ceasing to give news or by furnishing inexact information and contradictory reports without any foundation in fact.

Add to that the fact that the trial of the photographer Buguet alluded to above, where it was foolishly attempted to lay the blame on the Jesuits, was but an unqualified mystery; for although the depositions of the witnesses showed that Buguet had sometimes cheated, they showed also that very

many other times he had been perfectly sincere. It does not seem, either, that the case was conducted with the desire of finding out the entire truth; for although the apparatus with which Buguet was supposed to have deceived his clients was brought into court, the photographer was never asked to reproduce before his victims his supposed deceptive operations. And finally it was declared that Buguet's confessions of fraud were extorted from him by threats and promises, for, a little less than three months after his condemnation in Paris, he sent from Belgium, where he had retired, to the minister of justice in France, a retraction and protest drawn up in presence of witnesses and of the Chancellor of the French Legation, dated September 27, 1875. What faith, then, can one give to such statements?

5. In our days a great stir has been made by the discovery of the fraud practised by the celebrated medium Harry Bastian, which discovery was made by the Archdukes John and Rudolf of Austria. Desirous of having a personal knowledge of spiritistic phenomena, which they had always regarded as mere juggler's tricks, the archdukes, with the

help of a leader of spiritism in Austria, Lazzaro, Baron Hellenbach, invited Harry Bastian to Vienna in the winter of 1884. This latter gave two *séances* before the archdukes on January 17th and 30th respectively, which caused grave suspicion to arise in the minds of the two august spectators. The princes then asked for a third *séance*, which was fixed for February 3rd of the same year. It was their intention to surprise the medium in the middle of his operations, and to find out for certain whether the imposture they suspected was true. And to this end they arranged things in such a way by means of suitable and concealed machinery, so as to be able suddenly to shut the door of the little room in which the medium was supposed to be asleep whilst the spirits appeared. The evening of the experiment the noises began, sparks flew about, raps were heard, and finally came the moment of the materializations which were Bastian's *forte*. At the very moment that a well-designed white figure appeared on the threshold of the little room in which Bastian had only a few instants before been left on an easy-chair in a state of lethargy by the two archdukes themselves, the latter, who had been holding the ends of

the cords destined to make the prepared machinery act, gave a violent pull. The door banged noisily behind the ghost, cutting off all retreat. The surprised ghost tried to force the entrance thus shut, but in vain. The two archdukes sprang upon him, undid his coverings, and all present saw that the ghost was no other than Harry Bastian. The latter, seeing he had been found out, began to tremble like a leaf. The princes had compassion on him, and kindly assured him that all was over, and that he had nothing to fear. An account of the proceedings was immediately drawn up and signed by all those present and was shortly afterwards published by Archduke John. This account was soon translated into every language; the Italian translation, by Francesco Busi, was printed at Florence in 1884 and forms a little 16mo volume of 119 pages.

There can, therefore, be no doubt that gross frauds and absurd juggling tricks have been found among the marvellous phenomena of spiritism.

But even in the case of H. Bastian it must be recognized that, in spite of the discovery of a most remarkable fraud, the mystery has always remained unsolved as to how he procured the intimate and

secret information by means of which he made such astounding revelations to the illustrious spectators about their families and ancestors.

6. Some clever people who have made an especial study of spiritistic phenomena assure us that, besides illusions and hallucinations and intended fraud, there is much unconscious fraud practised by mediums in absolute good faith, and without their in the least suspecting in what manner the marvels are brought about which take place with their assistance. This unconscious fraud has especial reference to the noises and raps which are supposed to be made by the spirits, and also to the moving of the furniture.

As to the noises and the raps for which the spirits are supposed to be responsible, it has been proved by Dr. Austin Flint, in America, and Professor Maurizio Schiff, of the Institute at Florence, that certain dull sounds very *similar* to the hollow and deadened knocks of a hammer, may be caused by the rapid contraction of certain muscles without any external movement of the body. Contractions of this kind may also be voluntarily caused by isolated muscles. When they are spontaneous, they are

specially effected by the tendons of the peroneal muscle hitting the bony surface of the fibula, and make sufficient noise to be heard some distance off. Dr. Schiff, who succeeded in becoming quite adept in this curious exercise, made successive and regular noises at will. Whilst he did this he could remain on his feet, or stretched on a couch, with or without stockings. If some one placed a hand on the outside ankle, the contraction of the peroneal muscle could be felt and recognized. On April 18, 1859, Dr. Schiff demonstrated in himself the truth and the working of this phenomenon before the Academy of Science at Paris.

After this communication of Schiff's, it was clinically proved that the phenomenon could be brought about either voluntarily or involuntarily. And I myself can bear witness to a case of the last kind in the clinica of Professor Luigi Concato, in Bologna, in 1873, of a young girl subject to St. Vitus' dance, who, by an involuntary rhythmical contraction of the peroneal muscle, automatically made dull sounds, closely and regularly following one another, during the whole time she was awake. In her sleep all ceased, because, as happened in her choreic con-

dition, the involuntary rhythmical movements of the muscles ceased. When illustrating the clinical case, Professor Concato did not fail to recall the interpretation made by Schiff as to the noises attributed to the spirits.

It was soon shown, also, by the researches of Velpeau and Cloquet, that similar noises could in a similar manner be produced in other parts of the body, such as the shoulders, the elbows, the hips, the instep, and, lastly, with the lower part of the spine.

Dr. Flint says, but *does not prove*, that he has demonstrated this to have been the case in the noises made by the first American mediums, the Fox sisters, in Rochester.

It is evident that if special noises may be made in the manner pointed out by Schiff, even unconsciously, there is nothing more logical than that to the spiritistic frauds perpetrated voluntarily may be added others not only involuntary, but also unconscious. And these would be more especially those which would entice the simple-minded to attribute to spirits what is merely a peculiar biological phenomenon, very often involuntary and unexpected.

7. As to the voices often heard in spiritistic re-

unions, it is admitted as proved that the intervention of some medium or ventriloquist is possible. It is well known that ventriloquists, even when they seem to be silent, may cause mysterious voices which seem to come from no one knows where, but originate at will from their bodies, and are deliberately produced by an individual physiological operation not yet completely explained.

8. As to the table-turning and jumping, some learned men say that from amongst the people forming the *chain* there may be one who becomes hypnotized, at least momentarily, owing to the prolonged wait and the eager desire of the expected phenomenon. The person in this state has no idea of his condition, and having only one fixed idea, namely, that of the table turning, unconsciously gives it motion and it gyrates; for it is well known that hypnotized subjects can exert extraordinary physical strength. Hardly is there a sign of movement before the people who form the chain rise rapidly and second the initial movement, in the belief that they are only following it. Meanwhile the individual, involuntary and unconscious cause of the phenomenon has barely given the impulse before he returns

to himself, and does not in the least remember what he has done in his hypnotic state, and denies all imputation of fraud of which he may be accused.

Thus, according to some wise people, the phenomenon of table-turning is but involuntary and unconscious fraud.

Such conclusions as the above are strung together in the report made March 21, 1876, by a commission appointed by the Physical Society of the St. Petersburg University to examine this question. The commission excludes the reality of many of the described phenomena, explains others as illusions, hallucinations, and conjuring, or involuntary and unconscious fraud, and gives very nearly the explanation we have advanced above.

9. But can we acquiesce in similar judgments, even when given by eminent persons, highly respectable in many ways? It does not seem to me that we can, especially if we remember how inconclusive were the findings of the greatest scientists when asked to pass judgment with regard to hypnotism. Elaborate reports are still kept in the archives of science which were made by Bailly in 1784, by Dubois d'Amiens in 1837, and by Double in 1840

to the Academy of Medicine in Paris, which mention as deceitful and fraudulent all that related to hypnotism. But it has nevertheless ever followed its own path till our own days, and has proved itself to be one of the most important conquests of modern science. In 1752, did not the Royal Society of London receive with contempt the letters on electricity presented by Benjamin Franklin, the inventor of the lightning conductor, judging him unworthy of figuring in the *Acts?* And, in 1802, did not Robert Fulton see the scientists of France reject as absurd the idea of employing steam as a motor force in ships?

10. With regard to the origin of spiritistic phenomena, it seems to us that if sometimes, and particularly in a few known cases, they were produced by means of fraud more or less gross, this fact is not sufficient authority to conclude that it was so in every case. What thing is there in this world in which fraud, deceit, and treachery have not a hand? Medicine has its charlatans; science its false apostles; even commercial banks sometimes have their credit notes forged! But must we therefore conclude that everything is false in these professions? A deduction of this kind with regard to spiritism

would be strangely illogical and inadmissible, especially when one considers that in most cases spiritistic phenomena are produced by the help of mediums who are ignorant, ingenuous, very often stupid, and almost imbecile, not to say positively daft.

And if some of those who have dealt with spiritism have tried to gain money thereby, or to turn the experiments into a social diversion, with some ridiculous burlesques and surprises, certainly this is not the case with the greater part of some millions of individuals to whom the practices of spiritism are not only familiar, but almost sacred.

As a further argument in support of this affirmation, it is well to remember that, so far, no one has dared to accuse of fraud the spiritistic manifestations observed and experimentally controlled by Crookes, with the help of his mediums, especially that in which the famous Indian Katie appeared, evoked through the mediumship of Mrs. Cook. The same may be said of the wonderful apparitions seen by Professor Richet and others of his colleagues, and those described under "Telepathy." Regarding this we ought to add a very important note made by Count Adolfo Poninski in a conference held at

Leipzig, and published by Mutze in 1872. It is as follows: The celebrated materialist Buchner had to give up all hopes of a prize of 10,000 dollars formally offered and deposited by an American society, in case he should be able to prove the fraud of certain spiritistic phenomena. Again, a prize of 30,000 francs was offered in Clifton on October 1, 1868, by Professor John Damian to Professors Tyndall and G. H. Lewes, should they be able to detect deceit and fraud in certain experiments in spiritism. The two opponents of Damian preferred to give up the attempt.

It may also be well observed that the famous discoveries of the fraud of some mediums at the most only concerns *some* of their numerous and marvellous operations; the rest are hardly even mentioned. And, moreover, the accounts give quite unsatisfactory explanations of the same frauds, indicating details and mechanism quite inadequate to produce the phenomenon in question. Thus, to give one example only, from the accounts published, it is not possible to understand how Eusapia Paladino, without any apparatus, and whilst she was firmly held on a sofa by the hands and feet before the Lon-

don Psychical Research Society, was able to sound instruments, to pinch people at a distance, to shake the window-curtains, and to move heavy tables, as certain anti-spiritistic English papers asserted she had done. It has been said that Paladino, by a nimble contortion of a hand and a foot, succeeded, in the dusk, in making the learned, cautious, and conservative people by whom she was watched and firmly held believe that they were holding two hands and two feet, whilst in reality they had but one foot and one hand in their power. It is hardly credible that such persons as those before whom Paladino operated would fall into such a trap. Even supposing this to have been the case, the lady had only one hand and one foot wherewith to perform her prodigies, for the other hand and foot were held by the assistants. This was evidently not sufficient to do what she did; and either she was acting in harmony with many co-operators in playing tricks on the bystanders, or she had the hundred arms of Briareus, or at least her members were able to lengthen and shorten themselves at will, like the tentacles of a polypus. What faith is to be given to some declarations of the discovery of fraud?

And the pretended discovery of spiritistic fraud must be taken for what the evidence is worth.

12. At any rate there are phenomena in spiritism which no conjurer's trickery, no fraud, can ever reproduce. The conjurer M. I——, of Robert Houdin's theatre, has declared that it is impossible that chance or dexterity could succeed in reproducing many of the wonderful effects of spiritism. And Bellachini, jester at the Berlin Court, says that it is absolutely impossible to imitate the greater part of spiritistic phenomena by means of juggling.

13. Moreover, while many have spoken of spiritistic phenomena as reproducible by conjuring tricks, no one has ever pointed out these tricks. Is it credible that from amongst so many initiated in spiritistic mysteries without any promise or bond of secrecy, none has ever been sick of the whole business and been tempted to reveal everything to the public? Is it credible that none of the many adepts in spiritism has ever realized that by such revelations he could gain large sums, and that he has always and everywhere thrust from him the temptation to make thereby quite honest and anything but despicable gains? Recently Leo Taxil and Margiotta, and

others, have not had the least hesitation, for the sake of money—knowing full well that they would one day be found out—in concocting colossal lies about masonic mysteries, and scattering them broadcast among the honest public. How is it that none of those who know all about the spiritistic secrets and abuses has never been led to make a true revelation, even when fame, money, and the approbation of all good people awaited him?

Finally, is it credible that many of those who have practised spiritism in their homes have deliberately deceived themselves, having recourse to mechanism and trickery to procure the effects which they attribute to the spirits, knowing all the time that these effects are the product of their most explicit and deliberate will by means of expedients anything but recondite and mysterious? Is it credible, either, that those who wish seriously to question the evoked spirit of some dear friend, are themselves willing to make a mockery of the matter by means of the hazy, lurid, vile, obscene, and objectionable answers which, according to the opinion of experienced persons, come by the interposition of deceiving and malicious spirits? This seems so absurd to me that it alone

is sufficient reason for me to maintain that the phenomena of spiritism are not always produced by the fraud and the trickery of mediums and their like.

14. Relative to the conscious and unconscious fraud of the raps, I should like to mention that from my own personal scientific experience of the case, observed in the operating room of Professor Concato, the sound of the knocks is so muffled that they could not be confounded with the clear and distinct hammer-like raps which are heard during *séances* on the tables, walls, furniture, and elsewhere.

Besides, were we to accept the theory of the involuntary or voluntary rhythmic contraction of some muscles, it does not explain how, with the medium remaining always in one place, the knocks are heard now from the right and now from the left, now from the wall and now from the ceiling. Those who pretend to explain everything say that in the semi-obscurity it is easy to confuse the direction whence the sound comes. But, however plausible may be this explanation when the experiment lasts for some time, every one may see through it without my troubling to point out its absurdity. For the rest, spiritistic experiments take place nowadays in

every corner of the world, and the knocks and the raps are always heard, whilst those which present the peculiar phenomenon of rhythmic contractions, whether voluntary or not, of some muscle are exceedingly rare.

Perhaps the contraction might be brought about by suggestion. But this is far from being proved. As suggestion can only procure what is known, to admit that suggestion procures the muscular action in question presupposes the knowledge of a physiological mechanism, which then can be no longer involuntary or unconscious. Again, in the *séances* in which the noises are heard from opposite and different sides, those on whom the suggestion to make these noises should have effect would have to be the greater number of the assembly; but it is very rare that there is more than one medium present.

15. The futility of the theory of the intervention of mediums or ventriloquists to cause the voices which are so often heard in spiritistic *séances* must be patent to all who know how rarely ventriloquists exist, and to all who consider how no ventriloquist can simultaneously produce several voices of different pitch coming from the opposite parts of a room, or

such different and contradictory experiments as often occur at spiritistic assemblies.

16. The explanations which clever people have made with regard to table-turning, seem to me absolutely puerile and unworthy of their originators. They are but vague words which, in my opinion, mean nothing definite.

In any case, even if they were true they would account only for those occasions in which the table moves whilst the spectators continue to hold it under their hands, and not for those occasions when the table continues to move without being touched, with the exception, perhaps, of the only medium.

That the explanations given are absolutely false is proved by the assertions of the experimenters to the effect that they have never pushed or propelled the table, but have been dragged along by it without being able to detach themselves however much they desired, in the same way that a person cannot unfold his hand to drop the handles of a magneto-electric machine in action. The experiment made by Crookes is still more convincing. With several others, he saw a heavy table move and rise from the ground more than once, whilst the *chain* had been

formed on chairs placed round the table, which itself was not touched by any one.

Besides, the interpretation of the momentum given to the spinning table, either fraudulently or unconsciously, by some one in a transitory state of hypnosis, can hardly apply to those very heavy tables purposely weighted to the extent of some half-score kilograms, whereby its movement, displacement, or elevation by a single person, much less by several hands or feet, is made physically impossible.

As far as regards the conclusions reached by the commission appointed by the Physical Society of the St. Petersburg University, we do not think them worth much attention—first, because the experiments from which they were deduced were made with manifestly hostile prejudices, and with national rivalry and jealousy against two distinguished local scientists—Wagner and Butlerow—who were declared adherents of spiritism; secondly, because the mediums chosen were not the most suitable or loyal, and the experiments were not made in the manner and to the extent agreed upon, because after the first want of success all ulterior investigation was abandoned, contrary to the arrangements

made, and because the reports were very arbitrarily reduced by excluding certain evidence which was to have been contained in them; finally, because the commission made no reply whatever to the vigorous protests raised by Wagner, Butlerow, the Councillor of State Aksakof, the anti-spiritist V. Markof, by Blavatsky, and many other respectable and cultured Russians, and did not even deign to mention this as documentary evidence at the foot of the report on their defective labors.

With regard to the writing, the unconscious and hypnotic state may, at the most, be used to explain certain communications obtained in different writings by the hand of some mediums. The substitution of personality by suggestion, which may cause a change in the mode of speech, might also change the manner of writing. The case mentioned by Charcot would be an example of such a possibility. The same may be said of the writing which is found in drawers after the lapse of some days, on paper which was placed there unwritten upon; for this may have been unconsciously written on during an attack of somnambulism.

But it must not be forgotten that this same possi-

bility cannot be admitted when, as in the case of the Hindu fakir, the writing contains some knowledge beyond that possessed by the writer, especially when developed and discussed in an unknown language never heard nor understood, and absolutely ignored.

Whatever case is brought forward, it will always be exceedingly difficult to prove that the hypnotic state is responsible for the phenomena; and it can never be determined with certainty that no other element of any kind has entered into its composition.

But evidently neither trickery nor hypnotism can explain the writing made under the very eyes of all with a self-moving pencil; or without pencil or ink on a sheet of paper between two pieces of marble or slate or strong glass, or with a little stick which moves automatically on sand. And much less can they explain the compositions of two persons distant from one another and writing without any mutual understanding, whose writings when read, each one separately, are without meaning, but when pieced together form a complete whole.

17. If, then, there are some facts in spiritism which may be attributed to trickery and fraud, to some involuntary and unconscious physiological

phenomenon, there are many others, very well authenticated, for which neither deception, art, nor science can render an account.

These last facts are certainly not very numerous. Rather are they scarce in proportion to the number of those who practise spiritism, for it is not every day, be it understood, that one comes across true, genuine, and conscientious mediums. Perhaps they represent but a small part of the phenomena attributed to spiritism, even under the most suitable conditions. We are willing to push things to an extreme limit of generosity, and we are therefore willing to concede that among the prodigies worked by the intervention of true, genuine, and conscientious mediums, even under the most favorable circumstances, only one-tenth or one-twentieth part relate to spiritism. But the question of their number does not influence the question of their nature. So that, even with our generous concession, our conclusion cannot be, and ought not to be, logically changed. If it were a question of only one *single*, really genuine spiritistic phenomenon, *its uniqueness* would not alter its essence or origin. The Bible gives in several instances the most explicit evidence

as to the reality of such phenomena. In its turn, the severe modern criticism of to-day, which is styled *hypercritical*, cannot deny their existence if it wishes to be logical and consistent in its methods of investigation, or if it does not wish to shut its eyes to the full light of the sun.

And it is precisely these genuine, although rare, occurrences which constitute modern spiritism.

18. With regard to their nature, science is constrained to tell us that not only are they superior, but, moreover, directly opposed to the most common and best-known laws of cosmic nature. In a word, the exact prediction of certain future events which do not relate to the person who is speaking, but to quite casual matters; the exact reproduction of the handwriting of persons long since deceased, obtained without previous preparation; the revelation of the details of some fact totally unknown to those present, and afterwards found to be most exact; the spontaneous knowledge of languages of which one was hardly aware of the existence even, and which will be no better known afterwards; a profound knowledge of abstruse, exact, and difficult sciences which is possessed for the short space of

fifteen minutes or so, and afterwards as entirely ignored as previously; the capacity of automatic locomotion which is suddenly acquired for a short time by the furniture in the room; the change of weight temporarily assumed by various objects; the generation of sparks, flames, and sounds without any kind of generating apparatus; the spontaneous rising of heavy bodies in spite of gravity, and their inclination to the right or the left quite outside the laws of equilibrium;—all these facts are such that every man, whether learned or simply endowed with common sense, cannot fail to recognize them as not only superior, but also contrary, to the most common laws of nature, whether biological, psychological, or physical.

In consequence of which we are constrained to see in spiritistic phenomena manifestations of a preternatural order. It is in vain to attempt to deny this *a priori*, or to combat it *a posteriori*. Chased out of the door, it re-enters by the window. The field of action may be restricted if one will, but entirely destroyed, no; because if we deny it in so many words, we feel it in us, around us, above us, wheresoever we are. Spiritism proves, in the most

incontrovertible manner, that supernatural order which rationalism and materialism together have for centuries obstinately, but in vain, tried to destroy and to exterminate. And a singular humiliation inflicted on the proud by Divine justice is that those who are most obstinate in combating the supernatural are among the first to recognize it in the phenomenon of spiritism.

Perhaps, some one may say, the activity and the energy of the cosmic forces already known may be neutralized and modified by the supervention of other physical forces now unknown, but of which the existence and the nature may be proved in the future. We do not deny that this may be admitted as possible, at least for certain particular facts, and especially for that form of *telepathy* which reduces itself to a pure and simple clairvoyance from a distance as in the case of Swedenborg, as related by Kant and already mentioned above. But we observe that, granting the possibility of such developments in our knowledge of cosmic forces, while such an explanation may be available with regard to certain forms of spiritistic phenomena, it cannot be true for all without exception. How exceedingly

absurd is the possibility that intelligent beings assimilate themselves *by nature's laws* with a mineral, a plant, or a piece of furniture to enter into communication, more or less futile, with the living members of the human species! Absurdity surpasses itself in the notion that, in the *natural* order, inanimate objects can be endowed with the power of speaking different languages with conventional alphabetical signs, or talk on abstract and abstruse subjects like doctors in a cathedral. Still more absurd is the possibility that writing appears *naturally* of itself without pencil, pen, or ink on sheets shut between pieces of glass under the eyes of dozens of attentive and often doubting observers. How absurd the idea that a living person could be in two distant places at once, or that the deceased souls of some decades back should send *by natural laws* letters from the other world on past events, expressing themselves in their own handwriting, simply at the invitation of the first curious or idle comer who is pleased to disturb their sepulchral quiet! Infinitely absurd to think that by means of *simple natural forces* deceased human beings can return temporarily to materialize themselves as the spiritists attest, now in a form which

is only visible, and now in a form which is both tangible and palpable!

19. To what, then, ought we to refer these phenomena? To what force shall we attribute them?

The answer to such questions comes from theology and philosophy, and not from medicine.

It pleases some to cut the Gordian knot by attributing everything to more or less unconscious illusions, to the dreams of feeble minds, for the reason that *some* spiritistic phenomena present a peculiar analogy with others belonging to psychical pathology; or are mixed with morbid mental manifestations; or arise in neurotic subjects, or by means of them. But they who thus argue do not consider that *many* of the extraordinary manifestations in question relate to purely physical facts, modifying the natural conditions of material objects, and this without the intervention of any human will or intelligence.

Others like to reiterate that spiritistic phenomena are due to fluid or dynamic emanations proceeding, voluntarily or not, from living subjects placed in a particular condition of mind and of body. But not the faintest logical proof of the reality of that supposed emanation has ever been brought forward by any one.

William Crookes, and others with him, believed the solution of the problem lay in a conception analogous to that already enunciated by St. Augustine on miracles, which he declared to be events which often occur not *against nature's laws,* but *against the knowledge* that we possess of the same laws.* And they explain everything by the *relativity of human knowledge,*† by which we, being as we are physically and psychologically, cannot know all that surrounds us. According to them, there exist occult forces of nature which may perhaps always remain ignored by us, because of the want of the senses and faculty necessary to perceive them. These occult forces, superior and perhaps contrary to many of the natural forces known to us, would not manifest their singular effects except in special determined cases, which we are not in a position to define; and then they would operate in an unusual manner, above us and around us, upsetting the habitual behavior of the things that concern us. But this doctrine is inadequate to explain the facts, for it assumes the possibility of powers which can

* *De Gen. ad Litt.*, bk. vi. ch. 13; *De civit. Dei*, bk. xxi. ch. 8.
† *Revue Scientifique*, May 15, 1897.

never be attributed to physical brute forces, however occult and extraordinary.

In view of the imprint of intelligence, of will, of tendencies, of affections, and of passions that undeniably characterize many of the singular manifestations which we are considering, it seems quite logical to admit that the phenomena point to the existence of immaterial beings who prove their existence by means of these singular manifestations.

Throughout the material creation there is among beings a hierarchy which rises from the more elementary forms upwards to man. Who will dare to say that creation ends with our sensible world? The continual scientific discoveries, of the physical order alone, more than sufficiently prove the absurdity of such a conclusion.

It is not contrary to reason, therefore, but rather philosophically credible, and almost logically undeniable, that there exist above man, in the order of created beings, other beings, more perfect than he, and therefore also more intelligent and endowed with greater physical power, they being, in their turn, the lower beings of an hierarchy which is formed of series of beings always more and more

perfect until the One most perfect, most powerful, and most wise Being is reached, the origin, the reason, and the end of all things. These beings are they to which our poor language gives the name of spirits, as if we wished to compare them to air or to gas, because like air and gas they escape the perceptions of our fine senses—especially the senses of sight and touch.

And as man acts on the creatures inferior to himself in this great hierarchy of beings, is it not, generally speaking, possible that those beings superior to him in the same order act in a similar way—especially when they are invoked and prayed to—on himself, and on those things which interest him? Indeed, again generally speaking, it seems highly probable that it is so.

Is it absurd that these beings, superior to man in the order of the hierarchy, should move in answer to invocation? And why? Does not man himself assist the lower animals when they are in danger or in need? At the sight of a dog attacked by a wolf, would not a man run to help the victim who dumbly implores his help? Do not even the animals of a superior order respond to the claims of other brute beasts who need their help? Is not the

dove who saves the ant from drowning by a blade of straw an example of this?

Must the prayers from man to the superior beings be held as a vain chimera simply because man under ordinary conditions cannot perceive the existence of these superior beings? Or must these beings remain deaf to the prayers and invocations of man simply because they are not intimately known by man in all their power?

But man in ordinary conditions sees and perhaps feels those infinitely small microscopic beings—bacilli, fungi, algæ—which are continually, but not always beneficially, in relation with him; of which only a few years ago he did not even suspect the existence, and which are even now hardly visible when enormously enlarged by the microscope and ingeniously colored. And does he know the intimate biological nature of these beings? And do these beings in their turn know man, and understand his existence and intimate nature? And does not man interfere, although unasked by them, in their intimate nature, in the conditions of their existence, especially by the researches he makes on the influence they have in the origin of many

maladies, and on their reciprocal biological antagonism?

On the other hand, is it against reason to suppose that among these different grades of created beings superior to man some are good and some are bad? All sensible creation, relatively speaking, is but a mixture of good and bad things. Why should it not be the same, within certain limits, of beings belonging to the supersensible world?

And may it not be that among these beings there may be found some who, having finished their existence on earth, have left their bodies behind in the sensible world, and have migrated with that which forms the spark and the working principle, the *spirit*, of their life to serener regions? On the contrary, does not everything go to prove that this is really so, and, moreover, ought to be so? And why, in the new world of their existence, may not these beings have affections and desires for the lower world, which they knew first, and where they have left things and persons dear to them?

The relativity of human knowledge, behind which Crookes and others have attempted to screen themselves to elude the cardinal question of spiritism,

does not in the least exclude, but rather serves to render highly acceptable, the existence of those superior beings whose objective manifestations the illustrious physicist himself has analyzed with the most ingenious mechanical processes and with automatic registers. Certainly no one can or will deny that being as we are, we cannot have a direct and immediate knowledge of these beings. But our ignorance does not authorize us to logically deny the existence of those beings simply because we cannot know them directly and immediately by the sensory and psychical means at our disposal. Confronted, then, by sensible manifestations which cannot relate to unknown physical brute forces because they bear the evident imprint of intelligence and will, of affections and passions, is it possible not to admit the existence of these same beings, proved by numerous facts, ascertained with all the rigor of our best experimental methods, because by the *relativity of our knowledge* we are denied the same evident conception of them that we all should desire?

Is it credible, moreover, that beings hierarchically superior to man should always hold themselves

ready to obey his beck and call? And is it credible that God allows these superior beings to enter so easily into communication with man, even to the detriment of the truth so dear to Him, and even when man is among the greatest rebels against Him? Is it credible that by such a permission God is willing to grant to the ribald and curious a privilege opposed to what we know of the manifest truths, either of science or revelation? And in what manner and by what means can the superior beings work many of the most wonderful manifestations attributed to them?

We are certainly not in a position to answer these questions, but that is not sufficient to destroy all the facts which prove the reality of the relations that exist between man himself and these superior beings —the ease with which they respond to his invocations, and the marvellous phenomena which they are pleased to produce at the simple demand of man.

As to what in particular regards the Divinity, it is not allowed us to scrutinize His ways, discuss His providential designs, or ask Him the why and the wherefore of His arrangements.

Besides, is it absolutely true that by permitting

easy means of communication between the superior immaterial beings and those who invoke them the Divinity does grant the latter a kind of privilege opposed to what is known of revealed truth, of science, or of faith? We deny it absolutely. History is full of accounts of authentic spontaneous apparitions permitted by God to encourage, admonish, and comfort those who, being believers, indulged in spiritistic evocations. But spiritists themselves confess with what tremendous penalties the Divinity punishes them, when they tell us the quantity of errors, the false and lying doctrine, the spirits are masters of, especially with regard to morals and religion. And can this be termed a privileged condition?

But if it be really the spirits who manifest themselves in the singular ways we have elsewhere noted, how is it that spiritism has never served to enlighten us on intricate historical questions, to settle some question of language, to indicate some lost object or unknown document, to solve some scientific problem, to recognize unknown maladies, to reveal special remedies, to predict future events? Even granting that all this is historically true and correct,

the answer seems easy. It must be evident that the ideas of the spirits of those who have passed to a better life, or of spirits which seek to communicate with the living, cannot be *per se* superior to those which the nature and culture of the single individuals can furnish singly to each of them. Who can believe or suppose that after death the spirit of a ploughman can be *per se* equal in point of intelligence and knowledge to that of Aristotle, St. Augustine, Dante, or Galileo? Besides, to no spirit is it permitted to manifest itself beyond those limits which have been fixed for them, or are fixed from time to time by Him who is more than they are.

20. It may be said that, thus considered, spiritism is identified with the old magic and with the necromancy of olden times.

We have nothing to say against these observations. We must also declare that we find no substantial difference between the magic and necromancy of times gone by and the spiritism of modern days; but we see so much resemblance between them that we conclude they are absolutely the same. To say that magic, necromancy, and spiritism are one and the same thing, is but to recognize a patent truth.

If in the past magic and necromancy also embraced many illusions, hallucinations, and impostures, that happened solely because then spiritism was not well separated from hypnotism and the occult sciences, as now they are not always kept apart from the hypnotic phenomena and the deceit and fraud with which they are often associated.

To those whom our own conclusions do not please, we may observe that it is not we who wish to prescribe them, but it is logic which, examining and weighing the facts, has, in the first place, imposed them on us, and then on all who do not wish to deliberately shut their eyes to the light of truth.

CHAPTER VII

EFFECTS OF HYPNOTIC AND SPIRITISTIC PRACTICES

1. Twofold effects of hypnotic and spiritistic practices —2. Social effects of hypnotism; their nature is nearly always harmful—3. Social utility of hypnotism; hypnotism in the courts, in education—4. Hypnotism in the diagnosis of miraculous ecstasies—5. Individual effects of hypnotism, physical and moral harm —6. Individual utility of hypnotism in the cure of certain morbid diseases—7. Precautions necessary in the use of hypnotism in therapeutics—8. Social and individual effects of spiritism always harmful, never advantageous.

1. The effects due to hypnotic and spiritistic practices may be considered from the social and from the individual point of view.

2. From the social point of view, hypnotism bristles with dangers not only because the number of neurotic imitators increases beyond description, but also because it may be used for the abuse and detriment of the respective interests of society and

the individual. For example, take a person in lethargy or catalepsy; he may be tamely made the victim of others' passions, others' cupidity, others' interest. Many faults against morals, against personal safety, or against the public and useful activity of a subject have been committed just by placing the individual in the hypnotic condition of lethargy or catalepsy. By then inducing somnambulism in a subject and making suggestions to him in that state, the family peace may be disturbed, rancorous motives and implacable hatred may lead to acts against all justice, to donations and wills, to the acceptance and recognition of debts never contracted, to liquidations of debts, to written declarations of a non-existing paternity, to the emancipation of minors, to promises of or consents to marriage, to the recognition of illegitimate sons, to renunciations of nationality or citizenship, to uncalled-for quarrels, to lying denunciations and false witness, to the perpetration of atrocious crimes, to assassination, infanticide, arson, political excesses, to apparently spontaneous confessions of crimes committed by others, or even quite imaginary and brought forward to distract the attention of detectives.

If sometimes, owing to the good habits of the individual in the wakeful state, suggestion may remain without effect, it certainly is not due to the merits of him who tries to implant it.

It is true that in the cases just mentioned it is not difficult most of the times to discover the origin of an event which may seem in many ways marvellous and inexplicable. Knowing as one generally does the habits of the individual who has probably been known to indulge in hypnotic practices; his previous good conduct, his neurotic state, and perhaps also the experiments undergone at the hands of other hypnotizers which may have been apparently innocent; and considering the unjustifiable, illogical, and incoherent conduct of the person in question, remembering at the same time the great maxim, *Is fecit cui prodest*, all these things will generally be quite sufficient to understand how matters have actually come to pass.

3. Nevertheless, when there is any doubt on these questions, if the individual is newly hypnotized it will be possible to obtain the necessary information and enlightenment from him to enable other hypnotizers to put him on the right road again.

And this is one of the most useful points of view from which hypnotism may be regarded socially: in some cases to help in the research and discovery of truth in the judicial courts, either by ascertaining whether an individual is or is not hypnotizable, or by obtaining from a hypnotizable person who has already been hypnotized in other circumstances certain elucidations which in a normal condition he would be absolutely incapable of furnishing. For whoever commits an illegal action whilst in an hypnotic condition has generally no memory or consciousness of what he has done. But on returning to the hypnotic state, he regains the remembrance of all.* So that the information which in a waking state he cannot remember he may, when rehypnotized, give to the judicial inquirers who need it.

But it is not permissible to use evidence thus obtained as absolute proof, for, should it happen to be the fruit of possible hallucinations, it would be anything but serviceable in demonstrating the truth. But it may be used as a clue to guide other detectives in establishing such positive elements of truth that to combat them would be absolutely impos-

* See *supra*, p. 90.

sible. Should the hypnotized subject have been commanded by his original hypnotizer to hide or forget everything, it will be sufficient, in order to put matters straight, for the hypnotizer who rehypnotizes the subject to assume the personality of the individual who is suspected of having given the command, and to countermand the order to forget or keep silence. By such very simple artifices the individual will quickly return to the necessary condition in which he may give the information required.

In analogous circumstances hypnotism may serve to defend or exculpate the innocent, as when an individual subject to natural somnambulism does something which may be considered a crime. In the waking state he, having quite forgotten what he did during the hypnotic attack, will have no means of self-justification, but will vainly protest that he knows nothing about the matter. Being rehypnotized, however, he will relate everything, and offer such justification as may give complete satisfaction when it shall have been proved to be true. Thus hypnotism will reveal innocence where ordinary detectives would find guilt.

A young servant in a state of natural somnambulism put her mistress's jewels in a place which she believed to be more secure than the usual one. When awake she could not give any account of the jewels, which had disappeared. She was accused of theft, and imprisoned. Fortunately for her, the doctor of the prison knew she was a somnambule, and, inducing an attack of hypnotism, he asked her where the jewels were. The girl replied that they were in her mistress's house, in such and such a cupboard, locked with a particular key, where she herself had put them for safety's sake. The doctor called the judge and renewed the experiment in his presence. The revelation was received very unwillingly, but on following up the indications received, the truth of all that the young servant had asserted was proved to be quite true. The poor girl soon regained her liberty, and received the apologies of her honest mistress, who acknowledged that she had accused her wrongly.

The question of the introduction of hypnotism into the tribunals and courts of justice is being much discussed. In the cases we have briefly mentioned it is evident that it would not be difficult to use

hypnotism at any rate as a means of removing certain obstacles which may embarrass certain judicial operations. So long as the magistrate does not use hypnotism to extort involuntary confessions, or to obtain declarations destined to serve as the elements of proof, but only employs it to eliminate a possible suggestion which may prevent the individual in question from saying what he would otherwise have wished to say, or to obtain such explanations as may serve as a guide in the search for useful elements of proof, so far may hypnotism be advantageously introduced into the courts of justice, and quite wrongly has its introduction been objected to by many.

It is certain that hypnotism could never be introduced into the courts of law to extort involuntary statements and confessions, for that would be offending individual liberty and will, and would be running the risk of obtaining false confessions. Neither may it be admitted to discover things occult, or mysterious crimes unknown to the subject, or to obtain lost or stolen objects, for no hypnotized subject has a special gift of clairvoyance which one can take advantage of, and to have recourse to such means would be equivalent to using means which

are inappropriate, puerile, ridiculous, insufficient, and also immoral. Besides, interest and hallucination might easily enter in, and there would be nothing easier than to obtain false indications, which, escaping due control, would easily succeed in deceiving and frustrating justice.

With regard, then, to the advisability of admitting hypnotism in courts of law, each case must be judged on its own merits, according to the varying nature of the circumstances.

If what medical journals from time to time tell us be true, another ethical advantage for society to be derived from hypnotism lies in the fact that certain depraved tendencies in the weak may be corrected thereby.

In the hospital of the Salpetrière, Dr. Voisin, by means of hypnotic suggestion, succeeded in transforming a bad and violent woman into an honest, agreeable, and docile creature.

Following the example of Dr. Voisin, Dr. Liébault had recourse to hypnotic suggestion to make a disorderly, intractable, negligent, and conceited college-boy * good, punctual, and studious.

* *Policlinico*, Supplement, 1897, n. 36, p. 905.

4. The possibility of inducing in some subjects certain ecstatic states, or of transforming them at will into lethargy, somnambulism, or into the wakeful state, or of developing them by the most fantastic suggestions, might sometimes be a valuable means of distinguishing a purely morbid condition from a truly privileged extraordinary condition promoted and willed by the Almighty. For it can hardly be admitted that God would leave to the caprice of the first comer the extraordinary gifts with which He is pleased to favor a chosen soul.

5. From the point of view of the individual, hypnotism is practically nearly always injurious, and only in very rare cases can it be regarded as really useful.

It is harmful to physical health and to morality. To physical health because it arouses latent hysterical nerves; because it exhausts the cerebro-spinal activity; because it tends to make the hypnotic state habitual; because this state exposes one to physical dangers such as falls, burns, etc.; and because it facilitates the entrance of hallucinations which may lead to morbid conditions, to self-mutilation, and even to suicide. It is injurious to morality

because it gradually distorts or deadens the moral sense; because it exposes one to the acceptance of the strangest and most revolting principles about crime; and because it excites strongly the love of the transcendental and marvellous, thus insensibly opening the door to spiritism.

6. In some exceedingly rare cases, however, hypnotism is individually useful, and this happens when by its means the cure of paralysis and of certain hysterical contractures, or of obstinate nervous affections, is obtained. Needless to say that in such cases there should be no scruple in the mind of the competent and prudent physician in having recourse to hypnotism.

7. Not only in the cases just briefly mentioned, and all cases relating to courts of law and to education, but in important surgical operations, such as amputations, the removal of visceral tumors, and so on, hypnotism may be utilized. As such operations would be immoral and sternly prohibited if undertaken as a pastime, so must hypnotism be regarded as wrong when indulged in as a mere spectacle or amusement. As surgical operations may only be performed by those who have been proved capable and duly authorized, so

hypnotism as a curative means should not be allowed to all, but only to doctors. And as serious operations may only be resorted to when absolutely necessary, so should it be with hypnotism. As these operations do not take place in public, but in hospitals, so should hypnotism be restricted to private places equipped for that purpose. As important surgical operations are never performed without the assistance of capable and honest people, so should no mystery or secret be made of the practice of hypnotism. Both surgery and hypnotism should always be practised with the rules and the caution that are counselled by science, experience, and prudence. Finally, as no one can or may make an abuse of surgical operations, no more should this be done when hypnotism is applied to therapeutics.

If the unconditional, indiscriminate, and unlimited exercise of hypnotic practices is in nowise justifiable, it is very different in the case of the prudent use of hypnotism under special conditions, and with the necessary restrictions with a view to effecting a cure. We do not in the least agree with those who would condemn hypnotism without reserve, and we are very sure that our view is the right one. After

what we have said, the thing seems so evident that it would be absurd to seek to prove it any further.

8. But we cannot say as much of the use of spiritism.

This, without any exception, has all the dangers and all the harm of hypnotism, both for society and the individual, which dangers, indeed, in many cases are augmented a thousand times; neither do they offer compensation in the shape of any advantage, unless it be the poor one of indirectly proving the existence of the supernatural, which is apparent in so many other ways.

For the widest and strongest principles of social, civil, and individual morality will be substituted in spiritistic communications follies of all kinds, which, moreover, vary in different places. And whilst spiritism proclaims all religions as equally good, it makes an exception of the only true one which admits no error or superstition of any sort—namely, the Catholic and Apostolic religion of Christ.

In the persons who take the part of mediums, or in those who assist at their operations, spiritism produces either the deadening or the morbid exaggeration of mental faculties, and causes the most

serious and organic nervous diseases. The majority of the most famous mediums, and not a few of those who have been assiduous cultivators of spiritistic practices, have eventually died insane, neurotic, or victims of progressive paralysis, which fact is evidently brought about by the agitating and absorbing life which spiritism necessitates.

But besides these harmful dangers which spiritism has in common with hypnotism, there are others of far greater importance, which arise from the increasingly intimate bond which its practice establishes between beings of different natures, passions, intelligences, morality, and tendencies. But it is for moral theology to occupy itself with these dangers and injuries. We have done enough if we merely mention them.

Neither can it be affirmed that spiritism sometimes affords some particular advantage by the recognition and cure of certain maladies, and in the suggestion of certain remedies. Although the indications thus obtained are sometimes true, they generally aggravate the condition of the poor patient. Spiritists tell us that this happens through the intervention of malicious and spiteful spirits. But how

can one ever be safe against the intervention and actions of such?

Thus spiritism may never, from any motive whatever, although utilitarian, be justified by society or by the morality and well-being of the individual. In this respect, then, it differs greatly from hypnotism, with which it is sometimes associated (hypnospiritism), but from which it differs substantially.

The only thing with regard to spiritistic phenomena which may in certain circumstances be held as lawful is when persons recognized as capable and competent, and with the necessary circumspection, authorization, and precautions, make a study of spiritistic manifestations which occur spontaneously, or which, for reasons of research only, may be provoked by students to decide if certain facts really exist, to what extent they may be accepted, and how the true manifestations of spiritism may be differentiated from deceit and fraud.

As to the doctrine, whether moral, semi-dogmatic, or semi-religious, which may be derived from spiritism, it must be remembered how little faith can be placed in such teachers, and how many other sources of truth are open to those who are desirous of moral

and religious perfection. As Dante pointed out even in his own times *—

"Non siate come penna ad ogni vento;
E non crediate che ogni acqua vi lavi.
Avete il vecchio e il nuovo Testamento,
E il Pastor della Chiesa che vi guida;
Questo vi basta, a vostro salvamento."

* "Paradiso," canto v., verses 74–78.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS

1. Conclusions of the present study of hypnotism and spiritism—2. Hypnotism and spiritism in history—3. Hypnotism and spiritism in their manifestations—4. Nature of hypnotism and spiritism—5. Hypnotism and spiritism in practical life—6. Immorality and morality of hypnotic practices; precautions necessary—7. Immorality of spiritistic practices, and absolute necessity of their prohibition.

1. From the study which we have made, with the greatest possible care, of *hypnotism* and *spiritism* must be deduced the propositions and conclusions which form the corollary of our work.

2. From the remotest days hypnotism and spiritism have always been more or less known to all peoples. Sometimes they were found together, giving rise to hypno-spiritism. The so-called animal magnetism of Mesmer and his followers was, in general, but the same thing as hypnotism; but in special cases, and in the hands of some, it became

a mixture of hypnotism and spiritism, with one or the other prevailing.

3. Hypnotism in its genuine form is constituted by determined morbid phenomena, which may be artificially induced or substituted one for the other. The morbid phenomena of hypnotism have all a parallel in the physico-pathological phenomena of common life, suggestion being among them. Some hypnotic phenomena may be induced in animals.

Spiritism in its genuine form is made up of physical and psycho-biological phenomena of quite a special nature, without parallel of any kind in the ordinary conditions of cosmic economy. In close touch and perhaps identical with it is telepathy.

4. Hypnotism is seemingly but one of the varied clinical expressions of an individual morbid condition, perhaps of an hysterical nature, either natural or acquired, permanent or transitory. It is never found in perfectly healthy subjects. Its symptoms are all of an ordinary nature. There exists no magnetic fluid capable of originating the phenomena recorded, whose natural origin is to-day interpreted more diversely and more rationally than was done in the past.

Spiritism is the manifestation of a preternatural order of activity. Its phenomena can only be partially explained by illusions, hallucinations, treachery or fraud, or by the particular physico-pathological condition of the mediums and their assistants. In many cases no physical laws can give a likely or probable explanation. Others, again, contradict the best known laws of nature. Spiritism of to-day is identical with magic, and with the necromancy of the Greeks and the Romans and that of the Middle Ages.

5. In practical life hypnotism and spiritism present serious dangers and difficulties, both physical and moral, social and individual. These dangers and difficulties are much greater in spiritism and in hypno-spiritism than in genuine hypnotism, which latter has its utility entirely wanting in spiritism.

6. Hypnotism is absolutely reprehensible, immoral, and therefore to be severely condemned if used from motives of curiosity or amusement or without proper safeguards. But sometimes it may be admitted and applied in public courts in order to establish certain truths, and in medicine as a means of cure. Even then it should only be used under fixed conditions, and with previously defined limits.

7. Spiritism is always dangerous, harmful, immoral, reprehensible, to be condemned and most severely prohibited without reserve, in all its grades, forms, and possible manifestations; with the rare exception, perhaps, of the study of certain manifestations, either spontaneous or induced in certain cases only, with the necessary circumspection and by persons authorized and recognized as competent who do not themselves participate directly in the provocation of the spiritistic phenomena to be studied.

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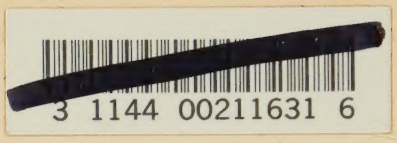
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